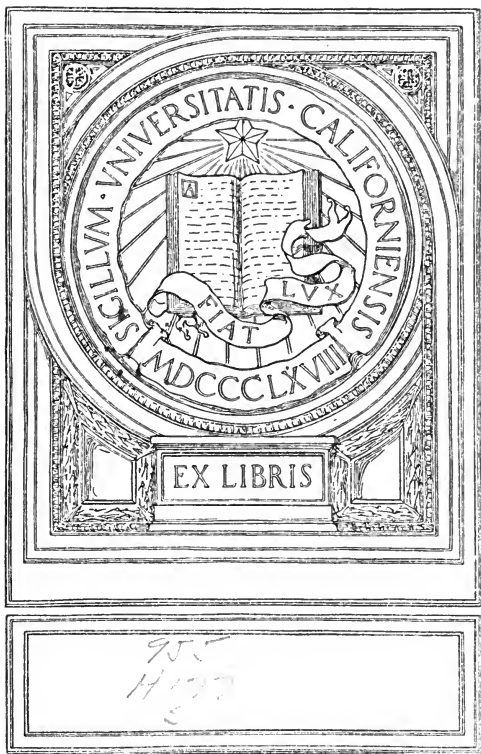


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THE
SOLDIER'S BRIDE

AND

OTHER TALES.

BY JAMES HALL,
AUTHOR OF "LEGENDS OF THE WEST."

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PREFACE.

The flattering reception of the "Legends of the West," has induced the publisher of that little volume to venture upon another by the same author. He is the more encouraged in this enterprise, by a belief that the American public is beginning to awaken from the apathy with which our native writers have heretofore been regarded, and that our countrymen are now willing to bestow upon native genius, some of the patronage which has been lavished with indiscriminate profusion upon undeserving foreigners.

A number of the tales in this volume have already been published, but some of them appeared several years ago, and are now forgotten: and while a few have had the advantage of extensive circulation in popular periodicals, others have not been thus favoured. It is thought therefore, that they will be sufficiently novel to most readers, and desirable to the friends of the author, to warrant the collection of them in a volume. It will be seen that they are strictly American. Should the work sustain in the opinion of the public, the character claimed for it, the publisher will have attained his object, and the author stand excused for permitting himself to be again placed at the bar of criticism as a writer of fiction.

Philada. 1833.

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THE SOLDIER'S BRIDE.

" Oh ! love ! love ! laddie,
Love's like a dizziness,
It winna let a puir boddy
Gang about his business."

A few years ago, that part of the state of New York which lies along the main route from the Hudson to the western lakes, presented an agreeable, but eccentric, diversity of scenic beauty, combining the wildest traits of nature with the cheerful indications of enlightened civility and rural comfort. The desert smiled—but it smiled in its native beauty. The foot of science had not yet wandered thither; nor had the ample coffers of a state been opened, to diffuse, with unexampled munificence, over a widely spread domain the blessings of industry and commerce. The beautiful villages scattered throughout this extensive region, exhibited a neatness, taste, and order, which would have been honourable to older communities. Between these little towns lay extensive tracts of wilderness, still tenanted by the deer, and enlivened by the notes of the feathered tribes. Farms, newly

opened, were thinly dispersed at convenient distances. The traveller, as he held his solitary way among the shadows of the forest, acknowledged the sovereignty of the sylvan deities, whose sway seemed undisputed; but from these silent shades he emerged at once into the light and life of civilised society. Such were the effects produced by an industrious and somewhat refined population, thrown among the romantic lakes, the fertile vallies, and the boundless forests of the West.

The war of 1812, while it exposed the feeble settlements of the frontier to the danger of hostile incursions, produced life and bustle, where, before, all had been silence and repose. Multitudes of men penetrated the quiet recesses of the forest, and pitched their tents by the peaceful waters, whose murmurs had heretofore mingled harmoniously with the songs of the native melodists. The drum, the trumpet, and the fife—the clash of arms, and the heavy reverberations of artillery—the rumbling of wheels, and the voices of men—all that is discordant, and all that is inspiring, in the sounds of war, burst upon the repose of the wilderness. In these regions, however, such terrific indications lasted but for a moment,—the gust of war, like the summer cloud sporting its forked lightnings as it swept along, rolled onward, to develop all its awful splendour, and destructive energy, on the distant field of battle.

In the spring of the year 1814, a company of

American soldiers, destined for the shores of lake Erie, marched through this sequestered country. Upon a delightful evening, late in the month of May, they arrived at one of those pretty villages to which I have alluded, upon the borders of a small lake. This little band consisted of about ninety newly enlisted men, commanded by a single officer, whose youthful appearance indicated that his military career had as yet been brief. The vicinity of a comfortable hamlet, and the signs of civility and plenty, were peculiarly grateful to the weary soldiers, who had toiled on their march from the dawn, until near the close of an unusually sultry day. If not "tired of war's alarms," they were oppressed with its fatigues. Emerging from the bosom of the monotonous forest, whose loneliness and silence had become tiresome, they halted on a small eminence, and gazed upon the scene before them. There were groups of cottages embowered in shrubbery, and a few edifices of higher pretensions, but less picturesque; and there was the village church, white as the driven snow, pure and spotless as the purpose to which it was devoted—with its pointed spire directing the soul to another world. The beams of the evening sun glittered over the blue waters of the lake, and the surrounding objects threw their long shadows upon its tranquil mirror. The lake itself, buried among the hills and woods, indented with bays and promontories, was so beautifully romantic, that even the rugged soldiers seemed

to inhale refreshment as they passed along its delightful shores.

Their own appearance was far less imposing. Fatigued with toil, covered with sweat and dust, their clothes soiled, their shoes worn with travel—they seemed to bend beneath the weight of their knapsacks, as they stood leaning upon their arms. Upon such occasions, however, the military rule is to put the best foot foremost—particularly if there be any fair ladies in the case—and the officer prepared to march through the village with all convenient *eclat*.

An unpractised observer would have smiled to see how much importance was given to the arrangement of a little band of jaded recruits, previous to their exhibition in a secluded hamlet. But what soldier triumphs not in the conquest of a female heart?—where is the martial spirit that is not elated with the smile of beauty? Churlish indeed would be the leader, who should fail in the observance of a customary homage to the fair, even of a village. Not so our officer—he determined that every heart in the hamlet should beat to the music of his drum—and cheerily issued his orders. The stragglers are called in, and the ranks closed. The systematic order of parade takes place of the looseness of the march. The soldier, whose weary limbs seemed incapable of further exertion, now appears to inhale new life; his nerves are braced, his form erected, and his arms grasped with vigour.

The drum strikes up a lively march—the little fifer sends forth his shrillest notes—the word is given, and the body moves forward with a firm and rapid step. The piercing sounds, wafted over the lake, announce the approach of the military strangers. The villager quits his work to stare—the enraptured children rush to join the cavalcade—the ladies forsake the tea-table, and fly to the windows to admire “the handsome fellows”—and the soldier is rewarded for his momentary exertion; conscious that he has excited a vivid interest which will not be forgotten—at least within the next twenty-four hours. In the rear comes the baggage-wagon loaded, followed, and preceded, by men, women, and children—the sick, the weary, and the lame. But even these are not without their pride. The poor soldier with his knapsack at his back—his child on one arm, and his wife leaning upon the other, feels himself as much

“—————his country’s stay,
In the day and hour of danger,”

as the stoutest comrade in the ranks.

The young officer led his command proudly through the village, and selected a retired spot on the margin of the lake for his encampment. Arrived at the welcome place of rest, a new scene of bustle ensues. The officer marks off the ground for his camp, and surrounds it by a line of sentinels. The pleas of fatigue are not allowed to interfere with the established rules of discipline, and all are

actively engaged in erecting the frail tenements of canvass, which are to protect them during the night. The wagons discharge their multifarious burthens, and each reclaims his own. The tents are pitched in a regular line, with technical accuracy. Parties are despatched to procure water, and wood, and straw. The fires are kindled in the rear of the encampment; the business of cooking commences, and cheerfulness reigns throughout. The sly jest, the loud laugh, and the martial song, resound. Satisfied with the present enjoyment, the careless soldiers soon forgot their past fatigues, and took little thought of the toils that awaited them.

There was one who regarded this scene with intense interest. Mr. Pendleton, the commanding officer, was a young gentleman of sense and feeling. Ardent, romantic, and ambitious, the path of life was bright before him. The world to him was, as yet, a world of novelty; he gazed with delight upon nature and on man, and dreamed of still greater enjoyments to be gathered in the bright career imprinted upon his young and glowing fancy. He had thrown his limbs on the grass, and reclining at full length, watched the unruffled still waters of the lake, and the sun-beams trembling among the tops of the tall trees. As he dwelt upon the quiet landscape, contrasting it with the tumult and the dangers which beset the path of ambition, certain hopes arose unconsciously in his bosom, picturing the scenes of bliss and repose that might reward a youth

of toil and peril. In his fancy he beheld a fairy lake, like the one before him, a cottage embowered with roses and honey-suckles, and a pair of soft blue eyes, beaming love and gladness over all. Then turning to observe the careless mortals who acknowledged his command, a sense of the responsibility of his station recalled his fleeting ideas.

The encampment was now surrounded by the villagers, who had eagerly collected to behold a spectacle, which, in our peaceful country, is happily of rare occurrence. The old and young of either sex were there, decked in the flaunting hues of rustic finery; and there were belles and beaux, and all the beauty and fashion of the hamlet.

"Good day, Mr. Corporal," said the village blacksmith to a non-commissioned officer, who was leading out a watering party. The corporal considered himself *on detachment*, and being fond of the dignity of a *separate* command, returned the salutation with an air of awkward condescension.

"Bound for Canada, eh! corporal?" continued the blacksmith, "Well, that's your sort—but where do you strike first? Quebec or Montreal?"

"Can't tell; we hav'n't determined yet."

"Close as a *vice*, eh!—that's the way with you military men—well, well, keep your own counsel, only mind you hammer the rust off *them are* British."

"Let us alone for that," said the corporal, "we shall give a good account of them before long."

"That's your sort, corporal,—strike while the

iron's hot—give me you yet. You're none of them tories and fellows that won't fight;—but I say, Mr. Corporal, can't you *jist* give us a *small idee*, a bit of a *hint like*, where you are going?"

"Can't indeed—don't know, 'till we take a peep at the red coats—but you'll hear of us somewhere along the lakes."

"Ah! that's your sort, corporal! Kingston, York, Fort George,—I see you know how to hit the right nail on the head—I guess I know what's what! Now my advice to you is——"

"After we dispose of them there small places," said the corporal, "we shall take Quebec."

"Right, right," said the sable politician, "that's *jist* my way—knock off all my small jobs first, and keep the heavy ones to the last; but I say, corporal, don't let them outwit you, as they did old Hull."

"They'll not catch old birds with chaff; we shall be wide awake, and duly sober—" "And 'live as a coal, eh! well, that's your sort,—*jist* my way, I'm always——"

Here the corporal marched off with his party, to the infinite chagrin of the loquacious smith, who, turning to an old woman who had put on her spectacles to see the soldiers, and had listened, with ears and mouth open, to the preceding dialogue—

"You see how it is, Mrs. Chatterglib," said he, "we pay these fellows our money, and can't get a word out of them; they've no more gratitude than

a bellows-handle—but they're fine looking young fellows, howsomever."

"Nice young men, indeed!" said the old woman, "more 's the pity—poor souls, they'll all be murdered!"

"Oh, bless you, no! they'll bear as much hammering as my anvil, and never mind it."

The villagers had nearly all retired, when Mr. Pendleton observed a young female lingering beyond the line of sentinels; and believing that neither solitude nor silence is ever voluntarily chosen by the fair sex, he thought that it would be a praiseworthy act of gallantry, to relieve her from both by his presence and conversation. Approaching with that easy air of familiarity which soldiers feel at liberty to assume towards rustic beauties, he discovered her to be a beautiful blue eyed girl of sixteen, whose neat person and agreeable features at once conciliated kindness. She wore a plain dress of domestic cotton, and the office of a bonnet was performed by one of those homely combinations of pasteboard and muslin, commonly called a *sun-bonnet*, which shelters head, face, neck, and shoulders, from sunbeams and admiring glances—unless a lady happens to have a very pretty face, in which case it is commonly thrown back. The garb of the fair stranger was coarse and plain, but there was an air of unstudied neatness throughout the whole economy of her person, that added a charm to her beauty, which mere finery could not

have given. She leaned against a small tree, resting her innocent and unsophisticated face on her hand in an attitude of deep abstraction, and gazing at the camp with that earnestness of curiosity, which is excited in inexperienced minds by the first sight of an unusually interesting object. Hers was not that idle glance attracted by gaudy colours, which the poet meant when he said

“the sex loves wicked fellows,”

but the childish wonder of an artless heart, throbbing with delight at the actual presence of a spectacle, which had mingled in her dreams, and warmed her fancy. The unexpected approach of the young officer covered her face with blushes, but an instant restored her to self-possession, and she replied to his salutation with a frankness which taught him to respect her confiding simplicity. Pendleton became interested, and entered upon the business of entertaining the lovely stranger, with a singleness of purpose that soon banished restraint; and ere the young enthusiasts had time to reflect that they were strangers, they were unconsciously strolling around the camp in easy conversation.

The youthful maiden gazed with delight upon all she saw. The tents were wonderful! the uniforms beautiful! the drum delightful! and the soldiers, sweet fellows, were, no doubt, every man of them an Adonis in the eyes of the romantic girl. Sweet are the dreams of youth, when fancy gilds with her

brightest hues all that is graceful, and veils every deformity under an imaginary charm! Such were the visions of the pretty rustic as she beheld, for the first time, a display, however humble, of "the pomp, pride, and circumstance of glorious war,"—a display against which no female heart has ever yet been proof. Every sentinel was, in her eyes, a knightly hero, glowing with patriotism, and courage, and honour; and their commander, of course, a very Washington. Her eye rested, with an admiration truly feminine, upon the gaudy ornaments of the young chieftain; the glittering epaulet, the gilded sword-knot, and the scarlet sash, were gayer and richer toys than her unpractised eye had been accustomed to behold; but they assumed a nobler value in her estimation, as the undisputed insignia of rank and merit, and as she gazed upon that young officer, her admiration was mingled with a softer sensation, which thrilled every nerve and artery with a new and undefinable delight. The officer marked the delirium of the sensitive girl, but was not coxcomb enough to be vain of the homage which he was conscious he owed to his profession, his dress, and his command, and shared with the humblest comrade in the ranks; and which even his little bandy-legged bugler, who was breathing forth his choicest holiday notes in an adjacent thicket, had contributed to inspire. His own emotions were of a varied, but not unpleasant character. Here was a young and beautiful girl, evidently of

the humblest parentage, venturing to indulge her curiosity by visiting a camp, with no other protector than her own innocence. Her entire ignorance of the impropriety of the step she had taken, was in itself interesting—so artless ! so fearless ! She seemed really to believe, in downright earnest, that men were her fellow creatures and brethren, and not wicked knaves lying in wait to devour helpless women ; and that the plumed warriors of the nation were bound to be good soldiers to a lady, as well as to a lord. But what struck him most, was the native intelligence, vivacity, and romantic turn of mind, which gave energy and ease to the language and manners of a peasant girl, who had received nothing from the hand of art. She said little, but her soft eye was lighted up with intelligence, and there was eloquence in every expression of her delighted features. That she was uneducated, and unaccustomed to society, was very evident ; but her manners were neither bashful nor vulgar—neither polished nor forward,—they had a certain natural ease, which was the result of innocence and self-respect. Perhaps the excited feelings of that evening, banishing ordinary associations, and giving a higher tone to the spirit, added an air of elevation to manners naturally chaste and simple. Be all this as it may, a handsomer or happier couple than this, has seldom been seen on the green sward ; and never did two hearts mingle more artlessly together.

Passing at length in the rear of the camp, they came in front of the guard-tent, near which a prisoner, in chains, lay extended on the ground guarded by a sentinel. The maiden gazed a moment upon the unfortunate man, and then, in a tone of horror, exclaimed, "Oh William! William! it is he! it is he!" The prisoner, whose eyes had been cast to the ground as his officer approached, raised them on hearing this exclamation, and displayed a youthful countenance, pale with disease, and deeply marked with grief and shame. An expression of anguish sat upon his face; his eyes were sunk, his dark locks, long and tangled, hung over his worn features, his person was clad in miserable rags—and his whole appearance was haggard, and forlorn. Without moving from his reclining posture, he extended one hand to the weeping girl, and with the other shaded his pallid features. The maiden had dropped on one knee beside him, and as the tear rolled down her cheek, she seemed like virtue bending to intercede for crime. For a few minutes both were silent; and the officer, respecting the sacredness of their feelings, ordered the sentinel to remove a short distance, and was himself retiring when he was overtaken by the distracted girl. In a few words she had learned the crime and the fate of the hapless youth. He had forfeited his life by desertion! "Save him! Pardon him!" she exclaimed in frantic accents, as she threw herself at the feet of the officer, "Oh! pardon him for mercy's

sake,—for the sake of his poor old mother !” It was some time before Pendleton could command himself sufficiently to attempt a reply, while the agitated girl continued to reiterate with all the heart-rending energy of grief. “ Oh ! do—do—pardon him, pardon my brother !” At last he succeeded in explaining to her, that he possessed no discretionary power over the fate of the unhappy youth, who must be tried by a court-martial, and if convicted could only be rescued from death, by the mercy of the commanding general.

“ Then,” said the girl, with the calmness of determined resolution, “ I will go to him !”

“ Impossible !” said Pendleton, “ the head-quarters of the army are at Buffalo the distance is more than a hundred miles—too far for an unprotected girl to venture.”

“ What have I to fear ?”

“ Every thing—fatigue, danger, insult—evils which you are too young, too innocent, to dream of—too weak to repel.”

“ An orphan girl, seeking to save a brother’s life, and to rescue the gray hairs of an aged widow from sorrow, will find support;—heaven will protect me !”

“ It cannot be—it must not be,” said Pendleton, “ you have neither strength to endure the toils of the journey, nor courage to surmount the difficulties which would beset your path.”

“ Oh, I can endure a great deal, for those I love.”

“Your love must be great, and your faith strong, if they could bear your spirit up through all the perils of a lonesome road, and a licentious camp. Let me beseech you not to think of such an adventure.”

“Ah! sir,” replied the ardent girl, “if you knew the pious mother of that young man—if you could hear the fervent prayers which she puts up daily and almost hourly for her only son, the darling and stay of her old age, you would not think any peril too great that could bring her peace and comfort. Oh! I will do any thing—risk any thing to soothe the bitterness of her affliction!”

“After all,” continued the officer, “your success will be doubtful. It is uncertain when a court-martial will sit; it may be in a few days, or it may not be for many months; the general will not interpose his authority until the evidence has been examined,—and at last he may not grant your petition.”

“Oh, he must grant it, he surely will—if he is a merciful man, if he is a father, he cannot refuse it.”

“He is a father, and a merciful man, and I think he will pardon your brother; but he is a soldier, true to his duty, and rigid in his discipline, and may think it improper to do so. You must remain with your mother to comfort her; trust to me the care of your brother's interest; I will be his advocate, and, if possible, procure his pardon.”

"Will you promise that?" demanded the girl eagerly.

"I promise it most solemnly."

"Thank you—thank you ; I knew you could not be so hard-hearted as to see my brother perish."

Pendleton smiled as he repressed the obvious compliment, which would have told her how little generosity it required to become the advocate of one who was dear to her. But he took her hand and pressed it, as she added,

"As you hope for mercy, remember your promise."

"I will both remember, and perform it religiously."

"Then I will trust you," said she, "farewell!"

She returned to the forlorn youth, and after a few minutes' conversation, retired. Pendleton would have accompanied her home, as the evening shades were now closing in, but bounding away with the fleetness of a deer, she was soon lost in the surrounding shades.

Long before the first gray streak illumined the horizon on the following morning, our little camp was awakened by the inspiring notes of the reveillé. Every soldier has felt the charm of this inspiring music. Whether it be that the tunes adapted to this purpose are remarkably sweet, or that the hour, when all else is still, is peculiarly propitious, or that hearts soothed by sleep, and minds unoccupied by thought, are more open to the reception of

agreeable sensations, it is certain that he who has once heard the melodious strains which usher in the military day, never forgets their delightful impression. Now the gladsome notes floated over the quiet waters, and the cheerful echoes enlivened the surrounding shores. The events of the preceding evening, had added another link to the chain of romantic associations in the mind of Pendleton; and as he stood with his arms folded, leaning against a tree, upon the spot where he had parted with the fair stranger, he felt his heart softened by new and peculiar emotions.

Another interesting feature in this scene was the assembling of the troops, to the morning roll-call. As the music played they were seen creeping unwillingly from their tents, a various group, some half-clad, and some in uniform. Gradually disposing themselves, they formed a line in front of the encampment, the non-commissioned officers passing about, or posted at intervals, with lights, which shed a glare over this little band, while every surrounding object was involved in gloom. As the music ceased, the officer advanced to superintend the calling of the roll; a deep silence prevailed during the performance of this duty, and at its conclusion the orderly sergeant announced that the men were "all present." Then the camp fires were kindled, and the morning meal was despatched while daylight yet lingered beyond the distant hills.

Orders were now given to prepare for the march.

The musicians, traversing the encampment with a rapid step, cheerily played "the general;" a merry march to which a yankee poet has adapted the homely strain,

"Don't you hear the gen'ral say,
Strike your tents and march away;
All the way to Hackensack,
Each with knapsack at his back?"

Activity and bustle now prevailed. The soldiers were seen packing their knapsacks and loading the wagons. Then the pins which distend the tents, and confine them to the ground, are drawn up, the tent-poles are supported by the hands of men stationed in the front and rear, the music concludes with a long ruffle, and as the last stroke falls upon the drum, every tent sinks at the same instant, and the whole encampment disappears. The tents and camp equipage are loaded in the wagons, and the soldiers, now in full uniform, parade with arms. The column is formed, a lively march strikes up, and the party moves off cheerfully, to commence the toils of a new day.

Arrived at the head-quarters of the army, Pendleton did not forget his promise. William Benson was soon brought before a court-martial, arraigned for desertion, and pleaded *guilty*. In vain Pendleton advised and entreated him to recall the honest confession—in vain the president of the court humanely admonished him that by this plea he abandoned all defence, and sealed his own doom.

Sullen and silent, he noticed their arguments no further than to repeat the fatal plea. But his generous officer did not abandon him to his fate. Presenting himself before the commanding general, he proved by incontestible evidence that the unhappy youth was a minor, who had been entrapped at an unguarded moment, by the devices of an artful recruiting sergeant; and then frankly related the manner in which he had become interested in his fate. This eloquent appeal came home to the bosom of the brave commander in chief, who not only pardoned the culprit, but directed his immediate discharge from the service.

Language is too feeble to describe the change produced on the unhappy youth by this intelligence. He had wholly resigned himself to despair; grief and shame had worn him down to a mere skeleton, and the almost certain decree, which doomed him to an ignominious death, had plunged him into a sullen apathy. To part with life was painful, but its possession had become a burthen; and he had viewed all the proceedings against him with stupid indifference. The rapidity with which his fate was hurrying to a crisis, left no time for that gradual process by which the mind is inured to guilt, and hardened against punishment and shame. With a heart still tenderly awake to the ardent emotions of generous youth, and glowing with the lively hopes and fears of that sanguine age, the rapid transition from innocence to sin, from sin to death, filled his imagina-

tion with horror; and his mind dwelled upon vivid images of pain until it became stupified with anguish. He had nothing to sustain him in his affliction—neither the soldier's pride, nor the Christian's fortitude. He could not feel the former, for he had deserted his country; nor the latter, for he had forsaken his God. His young heart clung to the world whose pleasures it had just begun to taste—but the world seemed all to have abandoned or condemned him. Of the friends of his youth, not one was here—the lips that used to pray for him seemed silent—few pitied and none consoled him; he was surrounded by those whose profession taught them to consider his crime unpardonable, and himself a degraded poltroon, part traitor and part coward, whose very presence was pollution. He had no consolation in his own reflections, for these pictured the agony of a widowed mother, whom he had abandoned—the vices of a brief but wicked life—the pangs of a public and shameful execution.

But when the news came that the forfeit of his crime was paid, that he was no longer a disgraced, forsaken man, no longer a condemned malefactor, but was freed at once from guilt, and bondage, and death, his heart leaped with joy, his whole frame swelled with gladness, and all his benumbed faculties sprung at once into vigour. The world was again bright and glowing—his crimes and his misfortunes were forgotten—his latent virtues came

into action—and the fountains of joy were opened in his bosom, pouring streams of bliss around his newly awakened senses. Gratitude was not the least vivid of his pleasurable sensations. He refused to quit his benefactor; and having sent the glad tidings of his release to his aged parent, remained with Pendleton as a volunteer, determined to wipe the stains from his character on the field of battle.

He fought by the side of his young commander on the field of Chippewa. The battle took place on the margin of the Niagara river, on an extensive plain, which had once been covered with fine farms, but now, forsaken by its inhabitants, and desolated by war, it exhibited only a barren waste. The river at that place begins to acquire some of that terrific velocity, with which it rushes over the awful precipice three miles below, creating one of the greatest natural curiosities in existence; the noise of the cataract is heard, and the column of foam distinctly seen from the battle ground. On the other side the field is bounded by a thick forest, but the plain itself presented a level smooth surface, unbroken by ravines, and without a tree or bush to intercept the view, or an obstacle to impede the movements of the hostile bodies, or to afford to either party an advantage. From this plain the American camp was separated by a small creek. In the full glare of a summer sun, on the morning of the fifth of July, the British troops were seen advancing towards our camp, across the destined field

of strife, their waving plumes, their scarlet uniforms, and gilded ornaments, exhibiting a gay and gorgeous appearance—their martial music, their firm and rapid step, indicating elastic hopes and high courage. The Americans, inferior in number, were hastily put in motion to meet the advancing foe; they crossed a small rude bridge, the only outlet from the camp under a heavy fire of the enemy's artillery; and moved steadily to the spot selected for the hot engagement. The scene at this moment was beautiful and imposing. The British line, glowing with golden and crimson hues, was stretched across the plain, flanked by pieces of brass ordnance, whose rapid discharge spread death over the field, and filled the air with thunder; while the clouds of smoke enveloping each extremity of the line, left the centre only exposed to the eye, and extending off to the river on the one hand, and the forest on the other, filled the whole back ground of the landscape. The Americans were advancing in column. They were new recruits, now led for the first time into action, and except a few of the officers, none of all that heroic band had ever before seen the banner of a foe. But they moved steadily to their ground, unbroken by the galling fire: and platoon after platoon wheeled into line with the same graceful accuracy of movement which marks the evolutions of the holiday parade, until the whole column was deployed into one extended front; the officers carefully dressing the line with technical

skill, and the whole brigade evincing by its deep silence, and the faithful precision of its movements, the subordination of strict discipline, and the steady coolness of determined courage. Now the musketry of the enemy began to rattle, pouring bullets thick as hail upon our ranks. Still not a trigger was drawn, not a voice was heard on our side, save the quick peremptory tones of command. General Scott rode along the line, cheering and restraining his troops:—then passing from flank to flank to see that all was as he wished, he wheeled his steed into the rear of the troops and gave the command to “fire!” A voice was immediately heard in the British ranks,—supposed to be that of their commander,—exclaiming, “charge the d—d Yankees! charge the d—d Buffalo militia! charge! charge!” The American general ordered his men to “support arms!” The British rushed forward with bayonets charged; but they were struck with amazement when they beheld those whom their commander had tauntingly called *militia*, standing motionless as statues: their muskets erect, their arms folded across their breasts, gazing calmly at the hostile ranks advancing furiously with levelled bayonets! It was a refinement of discipline rarely exhibited, and here altogether unexpected. The Americans stood until the enemy approached within a few paces:—until the foemen could see the fire flashing from each other’s eyes—and each could read the expression of his adversary’s face; then, deliberately, as the

word was given, the Americans levelled their pieces, and fired,—and the whole line of the enemy seemed annihilated! Many were killed, many wounded, and some, rushing madly forward with a powerful momentum, fell over their prostrate companions, or were thrown down by the weight of succeeding combatants. In one instant the ground lately occupied by that gallant line, was covered with flying Britons; in another, a second line had advanced to sustain the contest, while the broken fragments of the first were rallied behind it. The “Buffalo militia” were now the assailants, advancing with charged bayonets. Then it was that the young American chiefs, who led that gallant host, displayed the skill of veterans, and the names of Scott, Jessup, Leavenworth, M’Niel, and Hindman, were given to their country to adorn the proudest page of its history. Five-and-thirty minutes decided the contest, and the retiring foe was pursued, and driven to his fortress. None who saw, will forget the terrific beauty of that scene—the noble appearance of the troops—the dreadful precision of every movement—the awful fury of the battle—its fatal severity—its brief continuance—its triumphant close!

As the victors returned from the pursuit of the retreating enemy, a scene of intense interest was presented. They traversed the field which a few minutes before had sparkled with the proud equipage of war. There had been gallant men and gay

uniforms and waving banners ; and there had been drums, and trumpets, and the wild notes of the bugle, stirring the soul to action. There had been nodding plumes and beating hearts, and eyes that gleamed with valour and ambition. There too had been impetuous chiefs emulous of fame, dashing their fiery steeds along the hostile ranks ; and there had been all the spirit-stirring sounds and sights, that fill the eye, and the ear, and the heart of the young warrior, giving more than the poet's fire to his entranced imagination. What a change had a few brief moments produced ! Now the field was strewn with ghastly heaps of bloody and disfigured forms ; with the wounded, the mutilated, and the dying. The ear was filled with strange, and melancholy, and terrific sounds ; the shouts of victory had given place to groans of anguish, the complaints of the vanquished, the prayers or the imprecations of the dying. Here was one who called on heaven to protect his children ; another raved of a bereaved wife ; a third tenderly aspirated some beloved name, consecrated only by that tie ;—while others deprecated their own sufferings, or pleaded piteously for the pardon of their sins. Here were those who prayed ardently for death, and some who implored a few moments more of life. Complaints of bodily pain, and confessions of unrepented crime burst from the souls of many in heart-rending accents ; while some, as they gazed upon the fast flowing crimson torrent, wasted the brief remains of breath

in moralising upon the shortness of life, and man's careless prodigality of existence. Many gallant spirits there were, on that ensanguined plain, who prayed silently ; and some who dared not pray, and yet scorned to murmur. Their compressed lips bespoke their firmness ; their eyes wandered wildly and wistfully over the bright scene that was fading before them, and they grasped fervently the hands of those who mournfully bade them farewell. Last of all were seen those, in whom the soldier's enthusiasm overpowered every other sensation, who smiled at pain, and welcomed victory even in death.

The actors in this scene seem to have multiplied ; for those who had occupied but a small space, when marshalled in compact bodies, were now scattered widely over the plain. At one spot was a group of men, at another a heap of mutilated bodies ; all around were broken carriages, and the carcasses of men and horses. The distinctions of rank and country had ceased with many. The British grenadier and the American rifleman slept in death together ; the limbs of the common sentinel were thrown across the body of his officer. The soldier, slightly hurt, supported his desperately wounded enemy ; the dying Englishman reclined his head upon the lap of the bleeding American ; and the American threw his exhausted frame into the arms of the vanquished Briton. Every one demanded help from the nearest hand, or afforded it where it seemed most necessary. The sullen pride

of the vanquished, and the ready courtesy of the victors, alone distinguished their deportment.

“What wonderful infatuation! What a paradox in human nature!” exclaimed Pendleton, as he surveyed this scene. “Strange, that men with common feelings, with humane and generous propensities, without any personal animosity, should be arrayed in deadly hostility! Equally strange, that in a moment they should forget their enmity, in the kindly interchange of friendship and benevolence! Such are the effects of national ambition, such the fatal consequences of war!”

Proud as our young soldier felt of his own exertions he viewed the field of battle with the most painful emotions. His were the generous sensations of a noble mind, which could not gaze unmoved at human misery; time could never have familiarized his heart to these bloody scenes of death.

But it was his fate to witness again, and again, the awful splendour of the battle. He was present on that eventful night, when the thunders of war mingled with the roar of the mighty cataract. The battle was long doubtful, and bloody. The Americans, opposed to superior numbers, fought with desperate perseverance; leader after leader was carried wounded from the field, or fell at his post; and our little army, triumphant at last, purchased victory with the loss of half its force.

Pendleton shared the glory of the siege at Fort

Erie, when the brave garrisons repelled for many weeks the unceasing assaults of a potent army; when every day was employed in warfare, and the repose of every night broken by the roar of artillery. He witnessed the horrors of that night, when the foe, with imprecations of vengeance and vows of extermination, rushed upon our ramparts, determined to destroy or perish. He saw the effects of that tremendous explosion which filled the air with fragments of human forms, with lightning glare illuming the lake, the ramparts, the forest, and the plain:—and in short he shared the dangers and the honour of the brilliant campaign of 1814, in which four successful battles were fought with a foe of superior force, and not a single reverse experienced.

Our young soldier had now seen the world, and he had gained distinction. At the conclusion of the war he resigned his commission, and returned to his friends, bearing with him a severe wound, the witness of his services. He was received with open arms. Banquets were made in honour of his arrival. The gentlemen were prodigal of their welcome and their wine; the ladies were equally generous in tea and compliments. Many a lovely cheek glowed in his presence. True, the church bells did not ring—no splendid sword solicited his acceptance—nor did any public body notice the prowess of a subaltern; but in that little circle dearer to him than all the world, his laurels bloomed as freshly as those which decked his general's

brow ; and the young ladies who had paraded the streets for weeks to catch a glimpse of Brown or Scott, were satisfied with having seen Captain Pendleton, who, though not so celebrated, was younger and handsomer, and withal, had fought as desperately as either of those distinguished chieftains. Invited, flattered, and admired, the heart of the young soldier swelled with pleasure, and he felt that he had not lived in vain.

But this could not last for ever. It soon became necessary for Pendleton to choose another profession ; for happily, in our country, few men are willing, and still fewer are able, to live in idleness. He chose the law ; but it was long before his military habits could be changed for the labour of severe study, and the quiet of civil pursuits. The martial life is full of interest : its changes are numerous and abrupt ; it affords many pleasures, it excites proud and lofty emotions ; it enlivens, ennobles, and awakens the soul with generous feelings and novel associations ; its honours, its dangers, its hardships, its privations, arouse the highest energies of manhood, and elevate the mind with the consciousness of meritorious achievement. Even its hours of repose are filled with engagements that refine, and hopes that elevate. It has little to do with what we call the *business* of life ; the affections are not blunted, nor the mind degraded, with the selfish views, the servile employments, the sordid speculations, of worldly men. The heart and the imagination enter

into all the occupations of the soldier. It is a career full of interest to the young mind ; and they who have entered into the magic circle of its enchantments, imbibed its ardour, felt its vicissitudes, and achieved its laurels, return with an almost invincible reluctance to the sober pursuits of common life. Pendleton felt continually the absence of those inspiring emotions, those high hopes, and gay dreams, that had kept his soul continually soaring above mortality. His delicacy shrunk from the collision of grovelling ideas and gross employments ; and his thoughts often revelled in visions of " the plumed troop and the big wars." Among these day-dreams, the adventure of the peasant girl was not forgotten. It was a green spot upon his memory—a delightful subject of reflection. The beauty, the innocence, the courage of that lovely maiden, were deeply imprinted on his heart, and he often wished she had been born in a higher station.

Three years had now rolled away since the occurrence of the events described in the commencement of this tale. Pendleton's wound, which had but lately healed, and his confinement at a sedentary occupation, had produced a delicate state of health, which rendered his studies irksome and injurious ; and he resolved to try the fashionable remedy for all complaints, fresh air and exercise. His dissipated senses had scarcely recovered from the exhilarating effects of the scenes and feelings which I have described, and his mind became

again filled with romantic reflections, as he proceeded on his journey. Blackstone and Coke were in his head; but his heart was occupied with banners and bugles, and lakes and hills, and blue eyes and rosy lips. With these sensations he retraced his former steps. His eye wandered with new delight over the precipitous shores of the Hudson, he participated in the amusements of Ballston and Saratoga, and lingered with mournful pleasure along the banks of the Ontario. He revisited the scenes of warlike contention, and the graves of his former companions. He gazed with fresh emotion on the stupendous cataract, and strolled over the dilapidated ramparts of Fort Erie, mingling with the gay and fashionable tourists who now lounged in safety over the spots which he had seen peopled with a military array. He beheld industrious husbandmen, smiling cottages, and rich harvests, where he had seen a depopulated waste, and desolating armies. The change from smoking ruins, and deserted fields, to the delightful scenes of rural industry, was too enchanting not to produce a deep impression, and he turned his steps homeward with chastened feelings, and a mind glowing with virtuous resolutions. Convinced that true glory may be attained in the bosom of a peaceful community, and that true happiness exists only in the domestic circle, he resolved to seek tranquillity in the practice of usefulness and virtue.

Why was it that Pendleton, during a few days

that he spent in New York, at the commencement of his tour, had eagerly solicited his friends to procure him letters to persons residing at B— although he took no other letters, and in his wanderings rather avoided than sought society? Why, having procured these important credentials, did he take a different route, loitering at various points of interest, and only touching at B— on his return? And why did he then keep those letters in his pocket, and shrink from society more sedulously than before? “The young gentleman was in love,” says a fair reader. Perhaps so, but remember, madam, I do not assert it. As a faithful historian, I am bound only to relate facts, leaving it to philosophers and young ladies, who are versed in such matters, to reconcile these seeming contradictions.

B— was the same village in whose vicinity Pendleton had met the blue-eyed sister of William Benson. Established at the inn, he wandered about the neighbourhood, without any settled purpose, and with feelings which were, perhaps, imperfectly developed to himself. The villagers wondered who this silent stranger could be, who did nothing but draw pictures, and play on the flute, and stroll over the hills. Some thought he was an engineer, sent to trace the route of the new canal; others believed him to be a British spy, and a few insisted that he was an emissary, employed in some mighty political conspiracy. Their curiosity and suspicion became troublesome, and it was

to quiet these, that Pendleton one day presented a letter of introduction to Mr. Sandford, an opulent gentleman in the neighbourhood, who accidentally dined, on some public occasion, at the inn where he lodged. Mr. Sandford received him with great cordiality, kindly reproached him for having so long concealed himself, and insisted on Pendleton's becoming his guest, during the remainder of his stay in that country. This our young officer declined, but accepted an invitation to dinner on the ensuing day.

One of Pendleton's amusements had been to row a light skiff over the beautiful lake which I have described. Its waters were clear as crystal, and the smooth sheet, though narrow, was several miles in length—shaded with forests, and encircled with hills, which sometimes pushed their bold promontories far into the limpid tide, and then receding, allowed the water to extend its bays deep into the forest. Pendleton became enamoured of these solitudes, where he roved unseen and undisturbed; and every day saw his little bark gliding over the glassy surface. Sometimes he caught fish and threw them back into the water, and often, in the secluded recess of a bay or inlet, he played upon his flute, and listened to its echoes. There was one spot which particularly attracted his attention. It was a place where the towering hill seemed to have been reft asunder by some convulsion of nature, opening a deep gulf through which the

waters flowed into an irregular basin surrounded with rocks, and overhung with precipices. Trees and bushes springing from the crevices covered the rocks with verdure, partly concealing their abrupt projections, and casting on the silent water below a deep shade.

One afternoon Pendleton drew out his pencil, and attempted to sketch the features of this lonely spot. He sat in his boat, which was moored near the entrance of the recess, and was looking earnestly on the precipice opposite to him, when a female form issued from behind a projecting rock, and stood for a moment on the verge. Soon as her eye fell on the enraptured artist, whose gaze was rivetted ardently upon her, she fled. Pendleton remained immoveable with surprise, his fascinated glance fixed upon the spot from which the apparition had disappeared;—for in that fleeting vision he recognised the long lost, long cherished form of Benson's sister! He soon recovered his self-possession, and pursued the lovely fugitive, but after diligently exploring the rocks and bushes for hours, returned without having found the least trace of a footstep. Pendleton began to inquire seriously whether his fancy had not deceived him. The features of that lovely girl were deeply engraven on his heart; her form was often present in his sleeping and his waking dreams, and now, when his imagination was heated in the attempt to portray a wild landscape, and the “poet's eye in a fine

frenzy rolling" over an enchanted scene, the imaginary image of one fondly recollected might indeed have intruded into the picture. Such was Pendleton's conclusion as he resumed his oars and returned homeward over the silent waters.

This incident occurred a few days previous to his introduction to Mr. Sandford, and might have strengthened the desire he now felt to mingle in society. More than once he had remarked the romantic beauty of Mr. Sandford's residence on the shore of the lake. The house was small, but elegant, surrounded by a lawn, which extended to the water's edge, shaded with tall trees, and embowered in shrubbery. The gardens and all the grounds displayed a refined taste. Once or twice, when his little voyages had been delayed until a later hour than ordinary in the enjoyment of a moonlight scene, he had poised his oars to listen to the tones of a piano, and the dulcet strains of a female voice, issuing from that lonely dwelling. All these circumstances were so much in unison with the feelings of Pendleton, that he went to Mr. Sandford's, elated with pleasing anticipation. This will be the more readily believed when it is added that the mansion of Sandford was near to that fairy alcove where he had seen the apparition of the fair rustic.

His reception was quite as agreeable as he had expected. The house, the furniture, and the library, with every appearance of opulence, afforded evidence also of taste and liberality; Sandford was

sensible and polite, and his fair daughter was a beautiful and accomplished woman. The beauty of this interesting female formed but a small part of her loveliness ; her manners were engaging, her voice musical, her conversation sensible and easy—but when she sung there was a fascination in the soft fire of her eye, a melody in her voice, a feeling gracefulness in her expression, which added new charms to the poet's happiest thought. Pendleton gazed upon the bright vision with a pleasure so intense that it became almost painful. It was not alone because this lovely woman was young, and fair, and blooming—that her voice was music, and her eye poetry, and her step grace,—nor because she was surrounded by roses and honeysuckles, and all “the blest charms of nature”—nor yet, that his own heart was softened into the proper mood to receive the tender impression : all these things conspired to entrance the senses of our hero—but there was a cause paramount to all these which fixed his enchanted gaze, and made his heart palpitate with tremulous delight. In this accomplished woman he discovered a striking likeness to the peasant girl whose image he had so long treasured in his bosom ! Perplexed with a coincidence so wonderful, he returned to his lodgings that night, with a heart burthened with anxious thought.

Scarcely a day now passed which did not find our hero at the house of Mr. Sandford, and his visits seemed to be as acceptable as they were frequent.

Louisa's smiles continued as bright, and Sandford's welcome as cordial as at first. Young hearts soon mingle together ; youth has none of that repulsive coldness which makes confidence the growth of long acquaintance. There are certain affinities in human bosoms, certain influences which seem to operate imperceptibly by attraction, as the magnet impels the metal, and draws kindred spirits into contact and communion. The hearts of Pendleton and Louisa mingled as kindly as portions of the same element. They sang and played together, or strolled about the green lawn, or sat under a large elm which threw its branches over the surface of the lake. Sandford often joined them, and if he saw, he did not disapprove, their growing predilection. Whatever might have been formerly the case, Pendleton was now certainly in love ; and he enjoyed the emotions of that delightful passion without alloy. Still the likeness which he had observed at his first visit, haunted his imagination, and as he studied every accent and movement of Louisa Sandford, the peasant girl often recurred to him. Sometimes a tone of her voice would strike some chord of his heart, and awaken a thrilling sensation, and sometimes a gesture recalled so vividly the graceful attitudes of Benson's sister, that Pendleton could scarcely contain his emotions.

“ And pray why did not the love-sick gentleman make some enquiry after the fair incognita ? Here he has been lounging about a village inn, or

sauntering over the country for weeks, without using any exertions to discover his lady love—and now he is hanging over Miss Sandford's piano, distracted with doubt, when, by putting a simple question to her, he might at once remove his uncertainty?"

My dear madam, I could give you a score of good substantial reasons, in support of the conduct of my young friend; but I am happily relieved from the necessity of offering any by the fact which has just been developed, that he was in love, which accounts for all inconsistencies. Had Captain Pendleton pursued the course which you have suggested, he would have acted with what the law calls "ordinary prudence;" but then, madam, he would have behaved very unlike a lover, whose duty it is to arrive at the knowledge of his heroine's character and circumstances by the most circuitous methods, remaining long ignorant of what is known to all the rest of the world, and opening his eyes to full conviction only in the blessed state of matrimony. Besides, had he gone soberly in pursuit of his love as a gentleman seeks a lost spaniel, or sought information at every door, as a yankee pedlar hunts for old iron—he should never have been hero of mine; for not only would his conduct have been most *un-heroical*, but his search would in all probability have been *successful*, and this tale would never have been written. But moreover the very consummation which I have just

hinted at, success, startled the sensitive mind of Pendleton. His fancy had so long cherished a delightful vision, that he shrunk instinctively from a developement which might dissolve the airy fabric. Three years might have made a vast change in the fate of this fair girl. She might be dead, or, dreadful thought! she might be married! He might find her digging potatoes, or driving a cart, or rocking a cradle! Some great clodhopper might have sipped the nectar from those rosy lips, which would have charmed an anchorite; he might find her blowing the bellows of a grim blacksmith, or waxing the ends of a jolly shoemaker's thread! Besides, he was not only a modest man, but possessed a mind of refined delicacy, which suggested that Benson's mother might think he came to claim her thanks, or his sister might imagine he sought a reward, for the service he had rendered the friendless youth. In short, I could recount a thousand ingenuous feelings which operated to produce indecision; but as nine tenths of my readers would pronounce them nonsensical, and they will readily suggest themselves to the other tenth, I shall pass them over.

But more than all was he perplexed by the likeness between the sister of Benson, and the daughter of Sandford. His heart often whispered that they were the same. But how could that be? The one a poor girl, clad in homespun, the daughter of a widow, the sister of a common soldier; the other an elegant woman, the only and the darling child of

a man of fortune and education. He felt reluctant to dissolve an illusion which identified these two dearly cherished objects ; but he became satisfied at last, though the one had long animated his fancy, it was the other who now warmed his heart.

One day as they sat together, Pendleton, resolving to solve the riddle which perplexed him, took from his pocket-book a miniature of the fair rustic which he had drawn from memory, and presented it to Louisa. A beam of joy suffused her face, as she caught a first glimpse of the features of the portrait, which was changed to astonishment as her eye fell upon the dress. She cast an embarrassed glance at Pendleton, and again viewed the picture with tremulous confusion. For a few minutes both were silent—it was an interval such as many lovers have known, in which a single glance speaks volumes in a single moment—and the secret thoughts of the heart bursting forth from the eyes, the cheeks, and the lips, are eloquent in every feature—when the most interesting of all questions is asked and answered in timid looks, the doubts of years removed, and the blissful arrangements made for a life of happiness, by the silent language of the eye. That moment has fled with the rapidity of thought, and the lovers remain abashed with the delightful truth which has flashed upon them, the maiden covered with conscious blushes, and the youth gazing with unrestrained rapture at his bright conquest !

At length, to dispel an embarrassment which was becoming irksome, Pendleton said, "I will relate the history of that portrait—it is the memorial of a *firstlove*, and displays the features of one who has long possessed my affections." Then assuming a mock heroic air, and a gay tone, he proceeded: "You must know that once upon a time, when I was a young officer, and wore a fine uniform, and had a tall white feather in my hat, I marched at the head of my company, one fine summer's evening, through a pretty little village like that beyond the water, and encamped by a beautiful lake like that before us, and a lovely little girl in a homespun cotton frock and a white muslin sun-bonnet, with the sweetest blue eyes in the world, exactly like—yours—came to the camp to see me—"

"Oh no! no!—not to see *you*!"

"Well, well—I took the visit to myself, escorted her round my camp, fell in love with her,—and—drew her picture; or rather she left her own picture on my heart, from whence I took this copy."

"And what then?" enquired Louisa, timidly assuming a little of the archness of her lover.

"Why then, like a silly swain, I dreamed of her for three years."

"And then like an inconstant swain, forgot her!"

"No! no! forget her I shall never—I came to B—to seek her, and I trust I have found her here; my eyes have long been deceived, but my heart cannot be mistaken; you are—you must be she!"

“Nay—” said Louisa, as he would have taken her hand, “if this portrait exhibits the likeness of your beloved, you must seek her in the cottage of Mrs. Benson.”

“Mrs. Benson! surely I did not mention that name!”

“Then I have betrayed myself!” said Louisa; and she turned to fly, when the *tete-a-tete* was interrupted by the approach of Mr. Sandford.

The embarrassed maid soon retired, leaving the gentlemen together, and Pendleton, full of the subject, opened his whole heart to Mr. Sandford, disclosing all the particulars which I have narrated. That gentleman listened with emotion, and then replied, “Your confidence demands equal frankness from me. I will at once explain the riddle which has perplexed you. After the death of Louisa’s mother, I unguardedly contracted another marriage which proved unfortunate. Louisa, then a mere child, was treated unkindly by her step-mother, who prevailed upon me to remove to the city of New York, leaving my daughter to the care of Mrs. Benson, who had long been a domestic in my family, and whose husband was the manager of my farm. To them I entrusted this mansion and all my affairs here. I engaged in commercial speculations, and in the dissipations of a city life, I am mortified to acknowledge that I neglected and almost forgot my daughter. My only excuse is, that I was confident she was in the hands of kind and

worthy people; but I did not know that she was clad like a rustic, and permitted to run wild over the country. Mrs. Benson, however, though too indulgent, was a pious and sensible woman, and reared Louisa with sound principles, upon which I have since been able to engraft an excellent education. When I became a widower a second time, I returned to my farm, and found Louisa, shortly after you saw her, a wild rustic. She had originally a fine mind, and having had access to my library, it was not altogether unimproved, and since that time I have spared neither pains or expense in her education. During the war Benson died, and his son ran off and enlisted. Mrs. Benson was deeply afflicted by this event, and Louisa, who felt a filial tenderness for her, and regarded William as a brother, strove all in her power to comfort the wretched parent. She happened to be in the village when your company passed through, and was impelled by strong love for her old nurse, to visit the camp under the vague hope that William might be there. You know the rest—and you will not think it strange, considering her extreme youth, that her ardent feelings prompted her to be forward in the service of those who were justly so dear to her. Your name was of course known to us, from having heard it often mentioned by William Benson, who rents a small farm from me, and at your first visit we more than suspected that you were the same person of whom we had heard so much; Louisa

was quite abashed with the recollection of her visit to your camp, but believing that you did not recognise her, she begged me to keep the secret."

"There is no reason," exclaimed Pendleton, "why Miss Sandford should wish to conceal a circumstance which does her so much honour."

"Oh, I have no doubt," said Mr. Sandford, smiling, "that both of you have acted up to the most approved canon of romance, and that you deserve the credit of having done what few others would do in the same situations."

"There are few," replied the lover, "who are capable of imitating the example of Miss Sandford; my highest ambition is to possess the hand of one so highly gifted."

"You will have to ask her for it, then," said the gratified parent, "you have had my consent for some time, and I know you are too good a soldier to ask any assistance in gaining hers."

I need not draw the veil from the happy scene that ensued. They were seen that evening gliding arm in arm among Louisa's jessamine bowers, their cheeks shaming the rose, and their eyes dancing with pleasure; but as they never told me what passed, I must leave the reader in the same ignorance in which I find myself. They were married. Among the happy faces which appeared at their wedding, none were decked with brighter smiles than those of William Benson and his widowed mother; and among the joyful hearts, none were more truly happy than the gallant officer and his lovely bride.

MY COUSIN LUCY

AND THE VILLAGE TEACHER.

It has been well said, that memory never loses an impression that has once been made upon it. The lines may be obscured for a time, as an inscription is defaced by rust, but they are never obliterated; they may be buried under a crowd of other recollections, but there are times when these roll away, as the mist rises from the valley, and the whole picture stands disclosed, in its original integrity. Impressions made in childhood are the most vivid: years may pass, and other remembrances be gathered in, but those that lie deepest are longest retained, and most fondly cherished. Other events touch the heart and pass off without leaving a trace, but these strike in, engraft themselves, and become a part of our nature. Such, at least, has been my experience. I have lived a busy, and I trust not an useless life; I have seen much of the world; my feelings and passions have been excited, and my attention powerfully fixed, by events of deep interest; but none stand recorded in the same bold, indelible

characters which mark some of the remembrances of my childhood.

Not far from my father's residence there was a schoolhouse. It was a small log building, such as we often see in new countries, and stood in a grove, on an eminence near the road. Whether chance, or taste, or convenience dictated the choice of the spot, I cannot tell; but it always struck me as being not only well adapted to its purpose, but remarkably picturesque. The grove contained not more than an acre or two of ground, but the trees were large spreading oaks that I have seldom seen surpassed in size or beauty; for every observer of nature will agree with me, that trees, even of the same species, differ in appearance as widely as human beings. In every grove the vegetation has some distinguishing characteristic, just as all the inhabitants of a village have some trait in common. The trees are stunted or luxuriant, spreading or tall, majestic or beautiful; or else they are vulgar, common-place trees, as devoid of interest as the unmeaning people whom we meet with every day. I never see a great oak standing by the road side, without observing its peculiarities. Some are round and portly, some tall and spindling; some aspire, and others grovel; one has a gracefully rounded outline, and another a rugged, irregular shape. Here you may behold one waving its head with a courtly bend, and there you may see another tossing its great arms up and down like some angular, long limbed,

gigantic booby. Trees, too, have their diseases, their accidents, and their adventures. They are torn by the wind, shattered by the lightning, and nipped by the frost; and while some of them have in their youth the aspect of fallow and dyspeptic invalids, others flourish in a green old age; and whether standing singly in the field, or crowded together in the forest, whether embraced by ivy, clothed with moss, or hung with mistletoe, they always attract attention, by the peculiarities which they derive from these and other incidents.

Our schoolhouse oaks were of the majestic kind. They had braved the elements for at least a century, and seemed to be still in the vigour of life. Their great dark trunks were covered with moss, and their immense branches, interlocking far above the ground, shadowed it with a canopy that not a sunbeam could penetrate. The soil was trodden hard and smooth by the school boys, and covered with a short, green sward, over which the wind swept so freely as to carry away all the fallen leaves.

Here we played, and wrestled, and ran races; here, in hot weather, the master, forsaking the schoolhouse, disposed his noisy pupils in groups among the trees; here the rustic orator harangued his patriotic fellow citizens on the anniversary of independence; and here the itinerant preacher addressed the neighbours on the Sabbath. On occasions like the latter, our grove became as gay as a

parterre. The bonnets, and ribbons, and calicoes were as numerous and many coloured as the flowers of the field. The farmers and their families generally came to the preaching on horseback ; and it was a fortunate animal that bore a lighter burden than two adults and a brace of children. The young women rode behind their brothers or sweet-hearts, or in default of such attendants, mounted sociably in pairs, the best rider taking the saddle and holding the reins, as smart girls are always willing enough to do. It was a goodly sight to see the horses hitched to the trees in every direction, showing off their sleek hides and well combed manes to the best advantage ; and decked with new saddles, and gaudy saddle cloths, and fine riding skirts, that were never exposed to the weather or the eye except on Sundays and holidays. Then the people, before the sermon began, sitting in groups, or strolling in little companies, looked so gay and so happy, that Sunday seemed to be to them not merely a day of rest, but of thanksgiving and enjoyment. When they collected round the preacher, sitting silent and motionless, with their heads uncovered and thrown back in devout attention, the scene acquired a graver and deeper interest. I have never witnessed that spectacle on a calm, sunny day, without a sensation of thrilling pleasure ; and often as I have seen it, the impression that it made continued ever fresh and beautiful. There was a mingled cheerfulness and solemnity in

this sight, that attached itself to the spot, and I have afterwards felt in the midst of my studies or sports on school days, a soothing calmness creeping over me, a feeling that the place was hallowed, like that which we experience when strolling in a graveyard, or lingering in the aisle of a church.

My memory clings to this spot, as the scene of the most vivid pains and pleasures of my childhood. I pass over the detail of all the sufferings that I endured from the brutality of ignorant and tyrannical teachers; perhaps I was more sensitive than other children; but be that as it may, it is certain that although I was fond of learning, and docile in my disposition, I imbibed, very early in life, a cordial hatred for the whole race of schoolmasters. But I loved my books and my companions; I loved to play at ball and run races; and I loved the school-house grove, with its tall oaks and verdant lawn. I used to linger on a neighbouring hill, to look on that graceful swell, and those fine trees, and to wonder why I thought the landscape so attractive. Those who recollect their sensations on first entering a theatre, or reading a novel, can form some idea of my feelings. That first play and first novel remain through life impressed upon the imagination, as standards with which all similar objects are compared; and it was thus that the most interesting spot that attracted my young fancy, became to me the *beau ideal* of rural and romantic beauty.

There was another charm connected with this

spot, the secret of which I will now disclose to the reader, although for many years I hardly dared acknowledge it to myself. My cousin Lucy was my school companion, and I never think of that green hill without seeing her slender form gliding among its shades, with the same calm blue eye, and meek countenance, and soft smile, that she wore when we were children. I hardly know why I loved Lucy better than any body else, for she was several years my senior, and never was my playfellow. I romped and laughed with the other girls, and played them all sorts of tricks; but I never hid her bonnet, or pinned her sleeve to that of her next neighbour. From her childhood she was sedate and womanly; her deportment was always delicate and dignified; there was a something about her that repelled familiarity, while the winning softness of her manner invited love and respect. When I came near to Lucy I was no longer a wild, mischievous boy, but was elevated into a better and more rational being by the desire that I felt to please and serve her.

We had a succession of schoolmasters, the most of whom were illiterate men, who remained with us but a few months. At last there came one of higher pretensions than the rest. He was a young man of liberal education, who brought with him the highest testimonials of his character and attainments. He strolled into the neighbourhood on foot, and so great was his modesty that it was

some time before any body discovered his acquirements, or suspected the object of his visit. At length he proposed, with some diffidence, to fill the vacant situation of teacher; and, having produced his credentials, was readily admitted to that thankless office. He was altogether a different man from any of his predecessors. His temper was even, his heart kind, his manners easy, and he had the rare talent of commanding respect, and communicating knowledge, without the appearance of an effort. He was as bashful as a girl, and as artless a being as ever lived. Every body liked him; his good sense, his cheerfulness, his inoffensive manners, and industrious habits, made him the favourite of young and old.

It was customary in those days for the schoolmaster to board with his patrons, each one entertaining him for a week at a time, in rotation; an arrangement which, while it divided the burden of his subsistence equally, enabled the whole neighbourhood to become personally acquainted with the pedagogue. When the latter happened to be a dull, prosing dog, scantily supplied with good manners and good fellowship, the week of his reception wore heavily away, the table was less plentifully spread than usual, and the whiskey jug was sure to have suffered some disaster on the day previous to his arrival. The head of the family indulged himself on such occasions in liberal remarks upon the idleness and effeminacy of learning; and

the good wife, by frequent allusions to the scarcity of provisions, and the high price of schooling, gave the unfortunate teacher to understand that he was considered as a mere incubus upon the body politic—a Mr. Nobody, who was only tolerated, and fed, and allowed to sit in the chimney-corner, for the purpose of keeping the children out of mischief. But if the schoolmaster was a pleasant fellow, one who read the newspapers, and played the fiddle, and told a good story, the week of his visitation brought holiday times and high doings to the farmer's hospitable fireside. Then the good man heard the news, the girls heard the violin, and the mistress of the house found a patient auditor to the recital of all the misadventures which had befallen the family within the scope of her memory. Then the boys wore their holiday clothes every day, the hospitable board groaned under a load of good things, and the cheerful family enjoyed seven long days of good humour and good eating.

Of all schoolmasters, Mr. Alexis, the gentleman above alluded to, was the most popular one that ever darkened the door of a farm-house. In his time, the "schoolmaster's week" was a week of festival. He not only read the news, and played the fiddle, but could sing a good song, and recite the veracious biography of a hundred real ghosts. He could explain all the hard words in the Testament, all the outlandish names in the newspapers, and all the strange hieroglyphics which are mis-

chievously set down in the almanac, to puzzle the brains of simple country folks. Then he was affable and talkative; with all this he was good-humoured, and, what perhaps was more effective than all the rest, he was good-looking. With such qualifications he was always a welcome visiter, and I can well remember the stir that his coming occasioned in my father's house. On the preceding Saturday there was an universal scrubbing; the floors, the windows, the chairs, the pewter plates, the milk pails, and the children, were all scrubbed. The dimity curtains, that lay snugly packed away in the great press, sprinkled with lavender and rose leaves, were now brought forth and hung over the parlour windows; and the snow-white counterpanes, that were kept for great occasions, were ostentatiously spread upon the beds. The yard was swept, and the great weeds that had been suffered to grow unmolested, were plucked up; and the whole messuage, out-houses, tenements, and appurtenances, made to look as fine and as smart as the nature of the case would admit. Then such baking, and brewing, and cooking! The great oven teemed with huge loaves and rich pastry; yielding forth from its vast mouth puddings, and pies, and tarts, enough to have foundered a whole board of aldermen. The fatted calf was killed, the brightest ornaments of the pig-stye and poultry-yard were devoted to the knife, and the best blood of the farm was freely

spilled to furnish forth delicate viands, with which to pamper the appetite of that important and popular character, the schoolmaster.

I am often singular in my opinions, for I do not consider myself bound to believe any thing, merely because every body else believes it. As to the schoolmaster, I disliked him from the very first; and when every body else praised him, I was silent. I had an inherent antipathy against all pedagogues. I viewed them as our natural enemies, a race created to scourge and terrify children; and for the person in question I entertained a special and particular aversion. This was the more singular, as I was by nature confiding and placable, and never indulged a malignant feeling towards any other human being. He treated me with kindness, instructed me with unwearied patience, and I verily believe would have found the road to my heart, had I not suspected that he was searching out the way that led to my cousin Lucy's. I was always jealous of her, because the disparity of our ages placed her at a distance which almost extinguished hope, and because she always treated me as a boy and a relation, and either never did, or never would see that I cherished feelings towards her infinitely more tender than any that the mere ties of consanguinity could have awakened. A boy in love becomes cunning beyond his years. Unable to enter the lists as a candidate, and obliged to look on in silence, he becomes the secret and vigi-

lant enemy of his unconscious rival. I was continually watching the schoolmaster and my cousin Lucy; and not a glance, nor a blush, nor a touch of the hand, escaped my jealous eye. An indifferent observer would have seen nothing in their intercourse to excite the slightest suspicion; an enamoured boy, who had loved devotedly from the first dawn of intelligence, read volumes of meaning in every act and look. The conduct of both of them was perfectly delicate and unexceptionable. There was not the least approach to gallantry on his part, nor an inviting or an encouraging glance on hers; but I could mark the softened tone of his voice, and the involuntary reverence of his manner, when he addressed her. I could detect the brightening of his eye when she spoke, and the courteous bow with which he replied to any question from her, so different from the common-place civility with which he treated his other female pupils. He often walked home with her, but never without other company, for she was always surrounded by children, one or two of whom she held by the hand, as if to prevent the possibility of a *tete-a-tete*. Perhaps she never had a thought that there was any particular meaning in his attentions; but there is an instinct in female delicacy; and although it might never have occurred to Lucy that her teacher had opportunities beyond other men, which required that she should place a careful watch over her affections, nature regulated her

conduct. I was often with them ; they conversed without constraint, and never spoke of love, or courtship, or marriage. But he pointed out to her the finest traits of the landscape, gathered for her the choicest flowers, and discoursed of poetry ; sometimes reciting the most beautiful passages, in so eloquent a tone that I could have knocked him down, and was ready to quarrel with Lucy for the apparent interest with which she listened. Often did I wish that he was a thousand miles off, or that I was a schoolmaster.

It would be too tedious to set down all the mischievous pranks that I played our teacher, in revenge for his supposed attachment to my cousin. Though fond of learning, I obstinately persisted in a resolution to owe nothing to his teaching ; and more than once disgraced him and myself by wilful blunders, at our public examinations. I incited the biggest boys into conspiracies against his peace and dignity. Once when he was going to a tea-party at my uncle's, a little better dressed than usual, a troop of us scampered past him, as he was crossing a miry brook, and, pretending not to observe him, splashed a shower of mud and water over his holiday suit. We sent him one day into a large company with a grotesque figure chalked on his back ; and on another occasion scorched off his eyebrows by exploding gunpowder under his nose, while he was intently engaged in working a problem in algebra. None of these persecutions

ever ruffled his temper; and when my mother, who could not believe that the fault was mine, reproached him with the slowness of my progress, he mildly told her that the greatest geniuses were often dull boys at school, and that I would no doubt make a shining man.

At length the term of the schoolmaster's engagement expired, and my heart bounded with joy when I heard that he was going to quit the country. I was at my uncle's on the morning of his departure, when he called to take leave of the family. Lucy was in the garden, and Alexis went there to look for her. Young as I was, I could readily comprehend that a latent passion would be most apt to betray itself in a parting interview; and that of all places in the world, a garden is the fittest to excite tender feelings in the bosom of young lovers. In a moment a thousand thoughts flashed through my mind—in another moment love and jealousy prompted me to observe a meeting, which my foreboding heart told we would be fraught with more than usual interest. It was a mean act, but jealousy is always mean. I was too young, too much in love, and too angry to reflect; and if I had reflected, who could have thought it improper to witness any thing which could possibly take place between two such perfect beings as my cousin Lucy and the schoolmaster?

I crept secretly to the garden, and from the covert of a thick hedge saw Alexis approach my

cousin. He took her hand, and told her that he had come to bid her farewell; that he had bade adieu to all his other friends, and had deferred calling upon her until the last, because to part with her was more painful than all the rest. There was a touching softness in his voice, and a corresponding melancholy clouded his features. "What a canting rascal;" said I to myself; "I am afraid Lucy will never be able to stand it."

He then dropt her hand, and began to pluck twigs from a peach tree, while Lucy was industriously engaged in demolishing a great rose. At last he said, "There is one subject—" Lucy stooped down, and began to pull the weeds from a tulip bud. The schoolmaster stopped and looked embarrassed.

"Silly fellow!" said I, exultingly, "why does he not kneel down, and lay his hand upon his heart?" I took courage when I saw his trepidation, believing that he would never be able to tell his love, or that Lucy would discard so clumsy a lover.

"Miss Lucy"—said the schoolmaster.

"Sir!" said Miss Lucy.

"What a canting villain!" said I.

Mr. Alexis looked around, as if fearful of observation.

"He looks as if he were stealing," said I; "and well he may, the vile pedagogue!"

Alexis sighed, threw down his eyes, and resumed,

"There is one subject, Miss Lucy, upon which I have long wished—" He looked up, but Lucy was several paces off, twining the delicate vines of a honeysuckle through the lattice of the summer-house.

"She will never have him," said I, in an ecstasy; "I know she would never have a whining, canting, pitiful schoolmaster!"

Alexis followed Lucy to the summer-house, and remarked that "the honeysuckles were very fragrant."

"Very!" said my cousin.

"He has dropped the subject," thought I; "dear Lucy! how well she managed him! Ah! these schoolmasters know not how to make love; if I were there, I could show him how!" I breathed freely, and thought it was all over.

Alexis stood by the side of Lucy; he leaned towards her, and spoke in a low voice. What he said I know not, but the words were potent, for Lucy turned her head from him, and I saw that her face was covered with blushes, redder than the coral flowers that hung around her.

I thought she was angry. "If he has dared to insult my cousin," said I, "how proudly will I avenge her quarrel!" I looked again, and could scarcely believe my eyes! Lucy's head was reclining upon the shoulder of Alexis, and one arm was thrown gently around her! I thought their lips met!

I could stay no longer. I fled from the hateful scene, burning with rage and jealousy, and deeply mortified at my own meanness in having become the voluntary and secret witness of that which should have been sacred from every eye.

In a few days after this occurrence I left my native country. I had long been destined for the sea, and having now received a midshipman's warrant in the navy, set out for the sea-board. After I had bade adieu to all my other friends, I went to take leave of Lucy; for I, too, felt that this was the most painful of my separations; the parting with her seemed like breaking the last and tenderest tie that bound me to the land of my birth. She had always treated me with the affection of a sister, and never did her manner seem so tender as at this moment. When I left her father's house, she followed me across the little lawn before the door, and as I threw the reins over my horse's neck, and lingered to repeat my adieu, she put a paper into my hand. Her eyes were filled with tears, and my own were not dry.

I was some miles on my way from home before my emotion subsided sufficiently to permit me to read Lucy's note. In this she disclosed to me her engagement with Alexis; she said it had been approved by her parents, and that the marriage would take place whenever he should be established in a profession, for which he was preparing himself. She spoke of the fair prospects that smiled before her,

in an union with one so amiable and highly gifted. She said that she made this disclosure, because I was her nearest and dearest relative, after her parents, and was on the eve of so long an absence, that the separation seemed to be almost final. More she said, which I need not repeat; it was all kind and sisterly, and I vowed that I would always love my cousin Lucy, whether she married the schoolmaster or not.

Her note had one good effect, which harsher measures would have failed to produce. Her generous confidence subdued me; and as I reflected upon it in my cooler moments, I determined to smother my ill-fated passion, and to love Lucy only in manner and form as her cousin lawfully might. I resolved, moreover, to forego all my vengeance against Alexis, and to think of him with kindness.

In a few days I embarked. We had a brilliant cruise. The war with Great Britain was just declared, and the ocean swarmed with our enemies. We were frequently engaged, and generally successful. The novelty and excitement of this life soon caused a wonderful revolution in my feelings. I was no longer a romantic boy, brooding over a hopeless passion, with the single object of my adoration continually before my eyes. My heart had set up other idols; it had now ample sea-room, and, like our gallant vessel, rode gaily over the sparkling ocean of life. I learned to think of Lucy as the destined bride of another; yet I thought of

her as a lovely and a hallowed being, and sometimes pronounced her name with the reverence with which a devout catholic utters that of his tutelary saint. Often when our ship lay becalmed, when the clear moonlight was spread over the ocean, when the waves were at rest, and every thing was still, I would lie for hours upon the deck, thinking of the schoolhouse, and its beautiful grove, and my fair cousin. Then I would think of the honours that awaited me—of the time when I should be numbered among the heroes of my country; and would sigh to reflect, that the lovely flower, which so proudly I would have twined among my laurels, would be blushing unseen in the lowly cottage of a country schoolmaster.

During my first cruise, which lasted nearly two years, I was so fortunate as to distinguish myself on several occasions. But I panted for higher honours; and on our return to port, finding a fine frigate on the point of sailing, I solicited permission to join her, and being considered as an efficient officer, my request was granted, and I sailed on another cruise, without setting my foot on shore. This act of devotedness to my profession raised me in the eyes of my commander, who afforded me every opportunity of acquiring distinction. I now rose rapidly. When at sea I was engaged in every hazardous enterprise, and when in foreign ports my superior introduced me into the best society. Among the exotic beauties whom I beheld, I saw

none so beautiful as Lucy, but many who were more polished ; perhaps my taste became vitiated, for although I still cherished the memory of her unpretending graces, I learned to admire the more dazzling charms of others, and to indulge the thought that I might at some future day adore another in her stead.

After a long cruise, in which many dangerous exploits were attempted, and some of them brilliantly accomplished, we were homeward bound, when we fell in with a fine frigate of the enemy. Both ships were soon cleared for action, and after a bloody engagement we succeeded in capturing our foe. I was now acting as a lieutenant, and having the good fortune to be stationed on the spar-deck, immediately under the eye of my commander, received his compliments for my conduct.

We came into port triumphantly. Public honours of the highest character were awarded to us. Dinners and balls were given, and the population of a great city vied in the expression of their patriotic gratitude ; while the newspapers throughout the whole continent were filled with our praises. I was promoted to a lieutenancy, and had the gratification of seeing my name emblazoned in the public prints, with those of my distinguished superiors. In these proud moments I did not forget my fair cousin ; entirely as I had resigned her, and cordially as I wished her happiness, I sighed to think of her obscure and lonely fate. With a partner so

bright, so gentle, and so dear, to share my laurels, I should have been supremely happy ; and I could not but marvel at the capricious decree of fortune, which had doomed one, who might have shone as the bride of a naval hero, to drag out her existence in the vulgar lot of wife to a country pedagogue.

I had written to my parents on my arrival ; but a round of entertainments, given in honour of our victory, prevented me from visiting them. One evening, as I strolled through the streets with a friend, we passed a spacious church, into which crowds of fashionable people were hurrying with apparent eagerness.

“ Let us go in here,” said my companion, “ and hear the the fashionable preacher, one who has turned the heads of the whole town, and is more talked of than Commodore Perry or General Scott. He is a new man, who has eclipsed all his contemporaries by his eloquence, while his learning and modesty win universal esteem.”

We entered the church, and I looked round upon the novel exhibition, as upon some fairy scene. It was long since I had sat in the bosom of a worshipping congregation ; and how different was this from the rustic assemblage that I had been accustomed to see, gathered in pious silence under the schoolhouse oaks ! Here was a splendid edifice, ornamented with gilding, decorated with rich hangings, and lighted with brilliant chandeliers, whose intense effulgence awakened in my

unpractised heart a thrilling sensation of excitement. But the audience, how gay, how gorgeous, how beautiful! Those to whom such scenes are familiar, can form but a faint idea of the impression made by a fair and fashionable crowd upon the mind of one accustomed only to rustic assemblages, or to the hardy multitudes who fill the camp or crowd the quarter-deck. Here were gems, and plumes, and silks, and glowing cheeks, and sparkling eyes; but there was also a simple elegance in the attire, a sedateness in the demeanour, and above all, a devout humility, reigning throughout this thrilling scene, that added to it a solemn grandeur, which exceeds my powers of description. My heart was elevated as I gazed on that rich, and silent, and motionless picture; and I felt how the omnipotent influence of religion can quell the happy, and soothe the wretched, and win the gay, and calm down all the tumultuous passions of human nature, as oil poured upon the waves reduces them to a placid surface.

At length the preacher arose, and every eye was turned towards him. I looked up, and what was my surprise at beholding Alexis! I could not be mistaken, for there he stood in the same simple attire, with the same humble aspect, and the same benignant smile, that were so familiarly impressed upon my recollection. His manner had all its former mildness, and his voice its accustomed melody; there was only a little more of fulness and

compass in the one, and a slight tinge of self-confidence added to the other. His sermon was eloquent and able ; the language was clear, classical, and simple ; the manner of its delivery calm and unassuming. His voice was never strained, and seldom elevated above its ordinary pitch ; it swelled and softened upon the ear, without the slightest effort on the part of the speaker, without the least violence to the sense of the hearer. There was no labour of the body ; the arm was never extended, the hand only was raised occasionally from the cushion. The whole manner of the speaker was mild and persuasive ; his argument was acute, close, and powerful, without any attempt to adorn it with the graces of composition, or to win applause by the arts of oratory ; yet such was the effect produced by the delicate choice of harmonious words, their symmetrical arrangement and chaste delivery, together with the apostolic earnestness, and an air of pious conviction that breathed throughout, that all felt and acknowledged that the speaker had opened a new vein of genuine eloquence.

The deep silence that prevailed during the sermon, and the subdued murmur of applause that ran in whispers through the congregation when the service was over, attested the powerful effect of the discourse. As the people dispersed, I endeavoured to make my way to Mr. Alexis, but the crowd was so great as to prevent me from reaching the pulpit until he had disappeared ; and as it

was late, I returned to my lodgings, determined to seek him on the following day. I now saw that Lucy was not wedded to obscurity and indigence, and gave her full credit for having discovered a man of genius and feeling in the despised schoolmaster, who had so long been the object of my contempt and aversion. I took shame to myself for having presumed to institute comparisons between Alexis and myself; and felt humble in acknowledging that my ephemeral honours would soon be forgotten, while his useful career and splendid powers would sustain for him a brilliant reputation during his existence, and earn a name, which his countrymen would cherish with gratitude when he should be no more. One thing flattered my pride and consoled my prejudices; I learned that Mr. Alexis had long since abandoned his former vocation, and that my cousin had not, after all, married a schoolmaster.

On the following morning early, Mr. Alexis anticipated my visit, by calling to see me. We met cordially; and on the day after were jogging sociably together towards my native place. I found Lucy a proud and happy wife. They had built a neat cottage on the schoolhouse hill, in the midst of that beautiful grove, which they carefully preserved in memory of former days; and I now found that I had not been singular in my admiration of its sylvan graces. The schoolhouse had been removed; and a large, plain meeting-house, on a

neighbouring eminence, is occupied by a numerous congregation, under the ministry of Alexis. Loved and honoured by his former pupils, the worthy pastor is surrounded by them, who look up to him with gratitude as the teacher of their youth, and with reverence as the guide of their maturity; while the happy Lucy, in the society of her early friends and chosen partner, enjoys the sweetest fruits of innocence and virtue. Here they live in contentment and honour; and when I witnessed their placid lives, their pious labours, their active benevolence and simple virtues, I scarcely knew which to love and admire most, my fair and gentle cousin Lucy, or my ancient rival, but now my very reverend and much honoured cousin, "the school-master."

EMPTY POCKETS.

I would not have my fair readers to suppose, that I have dreamed away my life in a "Bachelor's Elysium" or a "Paradise of Coquettes," or that all my days have been devoted to "Love in a village." *I have done the state some service*, in the days that tried men's *soles*, and have had my own blistered with many a weary march. This explanation will no doubt dispel any surprise which may have arisen in the reader's mind when the title of this paper first caught his eye; for if there is any class of citizens in this vast republic, who are peculiarly fitted and prepared by experience to expatiate with accuracy and feeling on the subject of empty pockets, it is composed of those gentlemen who follow to the field a warlike chief. It is not necessary to state to what corps I belonged, nor will I be called upon, I trust, to exhibit my commission, or give a counter-

sign : It will be sufficient for my present purpose to assure my fair readers that although I now languish at the feet of beauty, or listen to the inspirations of the muse, I have in verity earned the right to "shoulder my crutch and show how fields were won."

I shall now proceed to relate an adventure which happened to me when I was a young man and a soldier. It was about nine years ago. I was then about twenty-one years old, but nobody would have taken me for more than eighteen. I was returning home from a severe tour of duty upon the frontiers, and wore in my features and habiliments the aspect of a "poor gentleman." My face was sallow and sunburnt—my cash low—my coat threadbare and my epaulet tarnished ;—as for my laurels, they were not yet in bloom.

It was about sunrise in the morning—a delightful morning in October—when a waiter at the City Hotel in New York roused me from a sound slumber to announce that the steamboat was about to depart, and that a porter waited for my trunk. Having discharged my bill and made all the necessary arrangements on the preceding evening, I had only to throw on my clothes and follow the bearer of my baggage, who paced Broadway with rapid strides. The street was filled with truant passengers like myself, some yawning from their broken slumbers, some grumbling from a half finished breakfast, some fretting about their baggage, and some were in high

spirits. All was commotion in the street and on the wharf. The bell was ringing, and the captain of the steamboat bellowing like a madman—"I'll swear I wont wait for nara man, woman or child *breathen*—cast off that cable there *forard*—stand by to clap on the steam! If people wont come in time I wont wait—If I do"—"Nobody wants you to wait," thought I, for I was now on board; and the boat was soon paddling her way through the water.

It was indeed a delightful morning, and the passengers crowded to the deck. Bright eyes and dull ones, drowsy heads and all, seemed to feel the vivifying effect of the beauteous scene and the calm hour. The soldiers were on drill at Governor's Island, the fatigue parties were at work, the drums were beating—all was bustle. But the water, and the surrounding shores, how serene, how lovely! As the eye wandered over the blue expanse—but perhaps my fair reader has never been at New York—has never seen the North river, nor the East river, nor the Battery, nor Governor's Island, nor the Narrows—if so, my poor dear unfortunate reader, it is utterly impossible to convey to thee any adequate idea of the picturesque beauties of New York Harbour, and the highest point of my success would be to make thy mouth water like that of Tantalus. I could indeed, if I had not long since disposed of my instruments, and almost forgotten their use, put my little knowledge of military topography in requisition, and sketch the commanding points of the land-

scape. I could exhibit the labours of "the patriotic diggers," display the last scene of Decatur's glory, and designate the spot where Hamilton fell, and the monument erected to his memory. But I beg to be excused—and to assure the reader that although I cannot enable him to participate in the pleasure, all these scenes, and the incidents attached to them, were glowing richly upon my fancy as the steam-boat cleft her rapid way through the silent waters.

But my attention was soon drawn to the busy, the smiling and the contented faces—the gay, the respectable, and the decent appearance of my fellow passengers. Fresh from scenes of tumult and danger—from the daily contemplation of hardy soldiers, lurking borderers, and sturdy woodsmen—from camps which, though containing the bravest of men, were surrounded by the worst of women,—with a heart sickened among the gloomy scenes of the hospital, and yearning after repose, I gazed with delight upon my countrymen. I marked the elegance of one, the neatness of another, and the suavity of a third—and contrasting this placid and cheerful display of national happiness, with the vice, dejection, and disease which I had left behind, my heart was filled with delight. Cheerful greetings, and friendly interchanges of civility were circulating round me; I only was unknown and solitary—but I reflected that I too should soon be surrounded by warm hearts and long remembered faces, and should feel a parent's embrace and a sister's kiss.

Strolling towards the cabin door, I now observed a large handbill, the "Rules and Regulations of this Boat," perspicuously set forth in legible characters. It was announced in this document, that shortly after the boat should get under weigh, a bell should be rung to summon the passengers to the clerk's room, where they were to pay for their passages, and be entitled to a seat at the breakfast table. A gentleman who stood near me perusing this important information, now turned to the captain, whose impatience had by this time subsided into a tolerable degree of calmness, and observed, "Would it not be better, captain, to make your passengers discharge their fare before they get on board? You must sometimes be imposed upon under your present regulations." "Not at all," said the captain: "very few persons travel in this way, who have not honour enough to pay—and as for the *slippery chaps*, I watch them, and I know one of them as soon as I see him."

The bell now sounded, and I hastened towards the clerk's desk, when, feeling for my pocket-book, what was my consternation to find it gone! I felt all my pockets, but found it not—I hastened to my trunk, but it was not there—the pocket-book was lost. Most people would on such an occasion have made an immediate and loud outcry, but I had learned from the rules and articles of war the danger of giving *false alarms*, and by my General, who though nicknamed *old Jake*, was a wise man and a

good soldier, I had been taught that we should not discover our weakness to the enemy. I had learned too in travelling, that nothing is considered as a surer sign of a slippery chap, than an empty pocket.

I therefore assumed as much composure as possible, and returning to the deck strolled up and down, like a sentry upon post, revolving what was best to be done. Perhaps there might be a bank-note lurking in some of my pockets. I was aware that this was the worst place in the world to look for a bank-note—but still, I was a careless fellow, and sometimes stowed my cash in odd places. Upon this suggestion, my pockets were searched anew, and a thorough inquisition had through every hole and corner of my trunk—a bank-note in *my* pocket, indeed! I might as well have expected to find the Sea Serpent there! However, my commissariat had not been deficient the day before—I will not name the sum in deposit, but it was sufficient. I had given all the loose change in my pocket to the servants at the tavern, and the porter who carried my trunk—the rest was in my pocket-book, and the pocket-book was—where? I had arrived at New-York the preceding day, had gone to the theatre at night, and recollected having had it while there. I had returned to the hotel late at night, and had discharged my bill, but whether from the contents of the said-pocket book, or from the loose change in my pocket, I could not tell. My heart and head had been too full of the sorrows of Juliet to dwell

on such trash as bank-bills and dollars—but now, I thought,

“How happy could I be with either!”

I was, inded, weary of conjecture:—one thing was certain, *my money was gone!*—and locking my trunk I walked to the side of the vessel, and leaned over, gazing at the water in deep reverie!

The surface of the water was unruffled, and as I looked upon it in painful thought, my agitated mind began to acquire a congenial serenity. Where now, I thought,—

“Where now, ye lying vanities of life,
Ye ever tempting, ever cheating train,
Where are ye now!”

I stretched my eyes to the shore, and measured the distance—“Oh such a night as this, Leander swam the Hellespont;” and why should not Lieutenant——immortalise himself by swimming the East River? I had but to leap in, a few minutes would bring me to the shore, and I could *march* to Philadelphia—but Leander swam by moonlight, and there was a lady in the case, besides I had had marching enough, I had no provisions, and could not carry off my baggage—I was in the enemy’s country, it was true, without the means of carrying on the war—but to retreat and leave my baggage!—“Old Jake” never taught me that!

The more I thought upon my situation, the more complicated, the more painful were my reflections. I was among total strangers—there was not a face

around me that I had ever seen, not an eye that would recognise me. I could not boast that genteel outside which is the common passport to civility—my tarnished vestments presented no very inviting appearance—my face was red and blistered by the sun—these might be taken as the indications of intemperance. I fancied that I exhibited the counterfeit presentiment of one of those *slippery chaps* alluded to by the captain. When my inability to comply with their lawful requisitions should be announced, what ungenerous surmises would be formed by this rough sailor and his hawk-eyed clerk! If my feelings should not be assailed by rude remarks, they would be equally galled by supercilious looks and silent suspicions.

Something must be done. I might appeal to the generosity of the captain; but I was to be his passenger only to Brunswick—how should I get thence to Philadelphia? Besides, I did not like his looks. I paced the deck with rapid strides, and with a sensation of real pain at my heart. My profession had led me through innumerable dangers; I had faced men in honourable fight, but I could not cope the redoubted commander of a steamboat, and challenge the inquisitive glances of a crowd of strangers.

The passengers were now crowding to the clerk's room with open pocket-books, or returning from it securing their purses, and buttoning their pocket flaps. Many of those gentlemen were doubtless

going to Philadelphia ; I might frankly acknowledge to one of them my situation, and solicit a loan, to be repaid on my arrival.—But he might doubt my word. I thought of Jeremy Diddler a thousand times, and wished for his easy knack of making useful acquaintances. I began to scrutinize the faces of my fellow-travellers—and endeavoured to find among them a generous, confiding physiognomy. I found some cold polite faces—some foppish faces—some miserly faces—and a great many common place faces which said nothing. There was one gentleman whose countenance pleased me. He was a middle-aged, fine looking man—easy and genteel in his deportment—with a noble eye and thoughtful features. I approached him, but at that moment a couple of fine girls who had been lounging over the deck addressed him as their father, and I shrunk back. They were beautiful—the rays of beneficence beamed from their eyes ; but a young gentleman does not like to disclose his poverty to the ladies, who of all things have a particular antipathy to empty pockets.

There was a young gentleman of an open pleasing countenance, with whom I now entered into conversation. He was quite accessible, communicative, and even voluble, and I was about to open my heart to him—but he ran on—became familiar, vulgar, and disagreeable. I turned from him in disgust.

“Come, gentlemen, be expeditious if you please,”

bawled the captain, "breakfast is on the table." I turned immediately towards a gentleman of respectable appearance, whose sun-browned features announced him to have been a traveller. I addressed him, learned that we were destined to the same city, and told him my story. The old gentleman looked at me for a moment with an inquisitive glance, then drawing forth his pocket-book presented it, and desired me to take what I wanted. I did so—presented him with my address, received his, and hastening to the clerk discharged his claim in time to take my seat at the breakfast table.

This was one of the petty incidents of life, but caused me more pain than I have sometimes experienced under real affliction; so true is it that we can bear any evils with greater composure than those which touch our pride, and that of all misfortunes there is none to be dreaded more than an Empty Pocket.

THE CAPTAIN'S LADY.

After an absence of several years from my native city, I had lately the pleasure of paying it a visit ; and, having spent a few days with my friends, was about to bid adieu, once more, to the goodly and quiet streets of Philadelphia. The day had not yet dawned, and I stood trembling at the door of the stage-office, muffled in a great coat, while the driver was securing my baggage. The streets were still and tenantless, and not a foot seemed to be travelling but my own. Every body slept, gentle and simple ; for sleep is a gentle and simple thing. The watchmen slumbered ; and the very lamps seemed to have caught the infectious drowsiness. I felt that I possessed at that moment a lordly pre-eminence among my fellow citizens ; for they were all torpid, as dead to consciousness as swallows in the winter, or mummies in a catacomb. I alone had sense, knowledge, power, energy. The rest were all

perdu—shut up, like the imprisoned genii, who were bottled away by Solomon, and cast into the sea. I could release them from durance, in an instant; I could discharge either of them from imprisonment, or I could suffer the whole to remain spell-bound until the appointed time for their enlargement. Every thing slept; mayor, aldermen, and councils, the civil and the military, learning, and beauty, and eloquence, porters, dogs, and drays, steam engines and patent machines, even the elements reposed.

If it had not been so cold, I could have moralized upon the death-like torpor that reigned over the city. As it was, I could not help admiring that wonderful regulation of nature, which thus periodically suspends the vital powers of a whole people. There is nothing so cheering as the bustle of a crowd, nothing more awful than its repose. When we behold the first, when we notice the vast aggregate of human life so variously occupied, so widely diffused, so powerful, and so buoyant, a sensation is produced like that with which we gaze at the ocean when agitated by a storm; a sense of the utter inadequateness of human power to still such a mass of troubled particles; but when sleep strews her poppies, it is like the pouring of oil upon the waves.

I had barely time to make this remark, when two figures rapidly approached—two of Solomon's genii escaped from duress. Had not their out-

ward forms been peaceable and worldly, I could have fancied them a pair of malignant spirits, coming to invite me to a meeting of conspirators, or a dance of witches. It was a Quaker gentleman, with a lady hanging on one arm, and a lantern on the other, so that, although he carried double, his burthens were both light. As soon as they reached the spot where I stood, the pedestrian raised his lantern to my face, and inspected it earnestly for a moment. I began to fear that he was a police officer, who, having picked up one candidate for the treadmill, was seeking to find her a companion. It was an unjust suspicion ; for worthy Obadiah was only taking a lecture on physiognomy, and, being satisfied with the honesty of my lineaments, he said ; “ Pray, friend, would it suit thee to take charge of a lady ? ”

What a question ! Seldom have my nerves received so great a shock. Not that there is any thing alarming or disagreeable in the proposition ; but the address was so sudden, the interrogatory so direct, the subject matter so unexpected ! “ Take charge of a lady,” quoth he ! I had been for years a candidate for this very honour. Never was there a more willing soul on the round world. I had always been ready to “ take charge of a lady,” but had never been happy enough to find one who was willing to place herself under my protection ; and now, when I least expected it, came a fair volunteer, with the sanction of a parent, to throw herself, as

it were, into my arms ! I thought of the country where the pigs run about ready roasted, crying, " Who'll eat me ? " I thought, too, of Aladdin and his wonderful lamp, and almost doubted whether I had not touched some talisman, whose virtues had called into my presence a substantial personification of one of my day dreams. But there was Obadiah, of whose mortality there could be no mistake ; and there was the lady's trunk—not an imaginary trunk, but a most copious and ponderous receptacle, ready to take its station socially beside my own. What a prize for a travelling bachelor ! a lady ready booked, and bundled up, with her trunk packed, and her passage paid ! Alas ! it is for a season—after that, some happier wight will " take charge of the lady," and I may jog on in single loneliness.

These thoughts passed rapidly through my mind, during a pause in the Quaker's speech, and, before I could frame a reply, he continued : " My daughter has just heard of the illness of her husband, Captain Johnson of the Riflemen, and wishes to get to Baltimore to-day to join him. The ice has stopped the steamboats, and she is obliged to go by land."

I had the grace to recover from my fit of abstraction, so far as to say, in good time, that " it would afford me pleasure to render any service in my power to Mrs. Johnson ; " and I did so with great sincerity, for every chivalrous feeling of my bosom was enlisted in favour of a lady, young, sensitive,

and no doubt beautiful, who was flying on the wings of love to the chamber of an afflicted husband. I felt proud of extending my protection to such a pattern of connubial tenderness; and, offering my hand to worthy Obadiah, I added, "I am obliged to you, sir, for this mark of your confidence, and will endeavour to render Mrs. Johnson's journey safe, if not agreeable."

A hearty "thank thee, friend, I judged as much from thy appearance," was all the reply, and the stage being now ready, we stepped in, and drove off.

As the carriage rattled over the pavement, my thoughts naturally reverted to my fair charge. Ah! thought I, what a happy fellow is Captain Johnson of the Rifle! What a prize has he drawn in the lottery of life! How charming it must be to have such a devoted wife! Here was I, a solitary bachelor, doomed perhaps to eternal celibacy. Cheerless indeed was my fate compared with his. Should I fall sick, there was no delicate female to fly to my bedside; no, I might die, before a ministering angel would come to me in such a shape. But, fortunate Captain Johnson! no sooner is he placed on the sick list, by the regimental surgeon, than his amiable partner quits her paternal mansion, accepts the protection of a stranger, risks her neck in a stage-coach, and her health in the night air, and flies to the relief of the invalid.

I wonder what is the matter with Captain Johnson, continued I. Got the dengue perhaps, or the

dyspepsia ; they are both very fashionable complaints. Sickness is generally unwelcome, and often an alarming visiter. It always brings the doctor, with his long bill and loathsome drugs, and it sometimes opens the door to the doctor's successor in office, Death. But sickness, when it calls home an affectionate wife, when it proves her love and her courage, when its pangs are soothed by the tender and skilful assiduity of a loving and beloved friend, even sickness, under such circumstances, must be welcome to that happy man, Captain Johnson of the Rifle.

Poor fellow ! perhaps he is very sick—dying, for aught we know. Then the lady will be a widow, and there will be a vacant captaincy in the Rifle Regiment. Strange, that I should never have heard of him before—I thought I knew all the officers. What kind of a man can he be ? The Rifle is a fine regiment. They were dashing fellows in the last war ; chiefly from the West—all marksmen, who could cut off a squirrel's head, or pick out the pupil of a grenadier's eye. He was a backwoodsman, no doubt ; six feet six, with red whiskers, and an eagle eye. His regimentals had caught the lady's fancy ; the sex loves any thing in uniform, perhaps because they are the reverse of every thing that is uniform themselves. The lady did well to get into the Rifle Regiment ; for she was evidently a sharp-shooter, and could pick off an officer, when so disposed. What an eye she must have ! A plague on

Captain Johnson! What evil genius sent him poaching here? Why sport his gray and black among the pretty Quaker girls of Philadelphia? Why could not the Rifle officers enlist their wives elsewhere? Or why, if Philadelphia must be rifled of its beauty—why had not I been Captain Johnson?

When a man begins to think upon a subject of which he knows nothing, there is no end of it; for his thoughts not having a plain road to travel, will shoot off into every by path. Thus it was, that my conjectures wandered from the captain to his lady, and from the lady to her father. What an honest, confiding soul, must worthy Obadiah be, continued I, to myself, to place a daughter, so estimable, perhaps his only child, under the protection of an entire stranger! He is doubtless a physiognomist. I carry that best of all letters of introduction, a good appearance. Perhaps he is a phrenologist; but that cannot be, for my bumps, be they good or evil, are all muffled up. After all, the worthy man might have made a woful mistake. For all that he knew, I might be a sharper or a senator, a plenipotentiary or a pickpocket. I might be Rowland Stevenson or Washington Irving—I might be Morgan, or Sir Humphrey Davy, or the Wandering Jew. I might be a vampyre or a ventriloquist. I might be Cooper the novelist, for he is sometimes “a travelling bachelor,” or I might be our other Cooper, for he is a regular occupant of the stage. I might be Captain Symmes going to

the inside of the world, or Mr. Owen going—according to circumstances. I might be Miss Wright—no, I couldn't be Miss Wright—nor if I was, would any body be guilty of such a solecism as to ask Miss Wright to take charge of a lady, for she believes that ladies can take charge of themselves. After all, how does Obadiah know that I am not the President of the United States? What a mistake would that have been! How would the chief magistrate of twenty-four sovereign republics have been startled by the question, "Pray, friend, would it suit thee to take charge of a lady?"

It is not to be supposed that I indulged in this soliloquy at the expense of politeness. Not at all; it was too soon to intrude on the sacredness of the lady's quiet. Besides, however voluminous these reflections may seem in the recital, but a few minutes were occupied in their production; for Perkins never made a steam generator half so potent as the human brain. But day began to break, and I thought it proper to break silence.

"It is a raw morning, madam," said I.

"Very raw," said she, and the conversation made a full stop.

"The roads appear to be rough," said I, returning to the charge.

"Very rough," replied the lady.

Another full stop.

"Have you ever travelled in a stage before?" I enquired.

"Yes, sir."

"But never so great a distance, perhaps?"

"No, never."

Another dead halt.

I see how it is, thought I. The lady is a *blue*—she cannot talk of these common place matters, and is laughing in her sleeve at my simplicity. I must rise to a higher theme; and then, as the stage rolled off the Schuylkill bridge, I said, "We have passed the Rubicon, and I hope we shall not, like the Roman conqueror, have cause to repent our temerity. The day promises to be fair, and the omens are all auspicious."

"What did you say about Mr. Rubicam?" inquired Mrs. Johnson.

I repeated; and the lady replied, "Oh! yes, very likely," and then resumed her former taciturnity. Thinks I to myself, Captain Johnson and his lady belong to the peace establishment. Well, if the lady does not choose to talk, politeness requires of me to be silent; and for the next hour not a word was spoken.

I had now obtained a glimpse of my fair companion's visage, and candour compels me to admit that it was not quite so beautiful as I had anticipated. Her complexion was less fair than I could have wished, her eye was not mild, her nose was not such as a statuary would have admired, and her lips were white and thin. I made these few observations with fear and trembling, for the lady repelled

my enquiring glance with a look of defiance; a frown lowered upon her haughty brow, and I could almost fancy I saw a cockade growing to her bonnet, and a pair of whiskers bristling on her cheeks. There, thought I, looked Captain Johnson of the Rifle—fortunate man! whose wife, imbibing the pride and courage of a soldier, can punish with a look of scorn the glance of impertinent curiosity.

At breakfast her character was more fully developed. If her tongue had been out of commission before, it had now received orders for active service. She was convinced that nothing fit to eat could be had at the sign of the "Black Horse," and was shocked to find that the landlord was a Dutchman.

"What's your name?" said she to the landlady.

"Redheiffer, ma'am."

"Oh! dreadful! was it you that made the perpetual motion?"

"No, ma'am."

Then she sat down to the table, and turned up her pretty nose at every thing that came within its cognizance. The butter was too strong, and the tea too weak; the bread was too stale, and the bacon fresh; the rolls were heavy, and the lady's appetite light.

"Will you try an egg?" said I.

"I don't like eggs."

"Allow me to help you to a wing of this fowl."

"I can't say that I'm partial to the wing."

"A piece of the breast, then, madam."

"It is very tough, isn't it?"

"No, it seems quite tender."

"It is done to rags I'm afraid."

"Quite the reverse—the gravy follows the knife."

"Oh! horrible! it is raw!"

"On the contrary, I think it is done to a turn; permit me to give you this piece."

"I seldom eat fowl, except when cold."

"Then, madam, here is a nice cold pullet—let me give you a merry-thought; nothing is better to travel on than a merry thought."

"Thank you, I never touch meat at breakfast."

And my merry thought flashed in the pan.

"Perhaps, sir, your lady would like some chipped beef, or some—"

"This is not my lady, Mrs. Redheiffer," interrupted I, fearing the appellation might be resented more directly from another quarter.

"Oh la! I beg pardon; but how could a body tell, you know—when a lady and gentleman travels together, you know, it's so *nateral*."

"Quite natural, Mrs. Redheiffer—"

"May be, ma'am, you'd fancy a bit of cheese, or a slice of apple-pie, or some pumpkin sauce, or a sausage, or—"

I know not how the touchy gentlewoman would have taken all this—I do not mean all these good things, but the offer of them; for luckily before any reply could be made, the stage driver called us off

with his horn. As I handed the lady into the stage, I ventured to take another peep, and fancied she looked vulgar; but how could I tell? Napoleon has said, there is but a step between the sublime and the ridiculous; and we all know that between very high fashion and vulgarity there is often less than a step. Good sense, grace, and true breeding lie between. The lady occupied one of those extremes, I knew not which; nor would it have been polite to enquire too closely, as that was a matter which more nearly concerned Captain Johnson of the Rifle, who, no doubt, was excellently well qualified to judge of fashion and fine women.

By this time the lady had wearied of her former taciturnity, and grown loquacious. She talked incessantly, chiefly about herself and her "*Pa.*" "*Her Pa* was a Quaker, but she was not a Quaker. They had turned her out of meeting for marrying Captain Johnson. *Her Pa* was a merchant—he was in the shingle and board line."

Alas! I was in the *bored line* myself just then.

Gentle reader, I spare you the recital of all I suffered during that day. The lady's temper was none of the best, and travelling agreed with it but indifferently. When we stopped she was always in a fever to go; when going she fretted continually to stop. At meal times she had no appetite; at all other times she wanted to eat. As one of the drivers expressed it, she was in a *solid pet* the whole day. I had to alight a hundred times to pick up

her handkerchief, or to look after her baggage; and a hundred times I wished her in the arms of Captain Johnson of the Rifle. I bore it all amazingly, however, and take to myself no small credit for having discharged my duty, without losing my patience, or omitting any attention which politeness required. My companion would hardly seem to have deserved this; yet still she was a female, and I had no right to find fault with those little peculiarities of disposition, which I certainly did not admire. Besides, her husband was a captain in the army; and the wife of a gallant officer who serves his country by land or sea, has high claims upon the chivalry of her countrymen.

At last we arrived at Baltimore, and I immediately called a hack, and desired to know where I should have the pleasure of setting down my fair companion.

“At the sign of the Anchor, ——— Street, Fell’s Point,” was the reply.

Surprised at nothing after all I had seen, I gave the order, and stepped into the carriage. “Is any part of the Rifle regiment quartered on Fell’s Point?” said I.

“I don’t know,” replied the lady.

“Does not your husband belong to that regiment?”

“La! bless you, no; Captain Johnson isn’t a soldier?”

“I have been under a mistake, then. I understood that he was a captain in the Rifle.”

“The Rifleman, Sir; he is captain of the Rifleman, a sloop that runs from Baltimore to North Carolina, and brings tar and turpentine, and such matters. That’s the house,” continued she, “And, as I live, there’s Mr. Johnson up and well!”

The person pointed out was a low, stout built, vulgar man, half intoxicated, with a glazed hat on his head, and a huge quid in his cheek. “How are you, Polly?” said he, as he handed his wife out, and gave her a smack which might have been heard over the street. “Who’s that gentleman? eh! a messmate of yours?”

“That’s the gentleman that took care of me on the road?”

“The supercargo, eh? Come Mister, light and take something to drink.”

I thanked the captain, and ordered the carriage to drive off, fully determined, that whatever other imprudence I might hereafter be guilty of, I would never again, if I could avoid it, “take charge of a lady.”

THE PHILADELPHIA DUN.

One day, no matter when, a stranger was seen riding slowly through the streets of a flourishing town in Tennessee. He was a well dressed good looking young man, mounted upon what in this country would be called, "the best kind of a nag." His appearance, altogether, was respectable enough; it was even, as respects exteriors, a touch above what is common; and he would have passed along unnoticed, had it not been for one thing, which excited universal attention. Although the streets were crowded with people, and the fronts of the stores adorned with fine goods, and such fancy articles as usually attract the eye—the stranger's gaze was fixed on vacancy; he turned his head neither to the right nor the left; he moved not lip nor eye-lid; but rode forward, as if apparently unconscious, as well of his own existence, as of the presence of his fellow creatures.

It was court week, and an usual concourse of people was collected. Here was the judge, with a long train of lawyers. The candidates for office were here, distributing smiles and kindnesses, and practising all those popular arts, which are so well understood in every republican country. Here was the farmer, clad in his neatest homespun, and mounted on his best horse. Here was the hunter with his rifle. Here, in short, were the *people*; collected, some for pleasure, and some for business, exhibiting that excitement of feeling which crowds always produce, with a good humour which is only found in countries where all are free and equal. The public square exhibited a scene which would have been amusing to one unaccustomed to such displays of character. At one spot were two neighbours driving a bargain. Unlike the people of other countries, who transact such business in private, they were surrounded by a host of people, who all occasionally threw in their comments. A stranger, judging from the sly jokes, the loud bantering, and the vociferous laughter which passed round the circle, would not have supposed that any serious business was in hand; a resident only would infer, that before this little circle parted, a horse would be swapped, a crop of tobacco sold, or a tract of land conveyed. Not far off, was a set of politicians, settling the affairs of the nation. But the most amusing individuals, were some two or three, who were *cavorting*. Now, if any lady or gentleman is

so ignorant of the American language as not to know what cavorting is, and if Webster's celebrated quarto does not furnish the definition, it is necessary that we explain, that it expresses the conduct of an individual who fancies himself the smartest and best man in the world. On the present occasion, a fellow might be seen, dressed in a hunting shirt, with a rifle on his shoulder, mounted, half tipsy, upon a spirited horse, and dashing through the crowd. Now he would force his spurs into his horse's sides, and put him at full speed, or rein him up until he reared on his hinder feet; and now he would command him to stop, and the obedient animal would stand and tremble. All the time he was ranting and roaring in praise of himself, his horse, and the United States of America. He boasted that he was born in the woods, rocked in a sugar trough, and suckled by a buffalo; that he could tote a steamboat, and outrun a streak of lightning; that his wife was as handsome as a pet fawn, and his children *real roarers*. He bestowed similar encomiums on his horse; and finally avowed himself to be a friend to the United States of America—and then he commenced again and went over the same round, flourishing his rifle all the time, and exerting his lungs to their utmost. Although he often declared that he could whip any man in the round world, except Col. C. that he *fit* under at New Orleans, nobody accepted the challenge, or took offence; the whole being considered as a mat-

ter of course, and as the natural effect of stimulant potations upon an illiterate man of ardent temperament, who, when duly sober, was an honest, quiet, and inoffensive citizen.

While the people were amused at the vagaries of this wild hunter, or engaged in conversation, the sun had gone down, and it was nearly dusk when the moving automaton, described in the commencement of this story, rode solemnly into the town. It is customary in this country for persons who meet, although unacquainted, to salute each other, and this courtesy is especially practised towards strangers; and although the new comer, on this occasion, would not have been expected to address each individual in a crowded street, yet, when those who were nearest nodded or spoke, as they civilly opened the way, they were surprised to see the horseman's gaze fixed on vacancy, and his body remaining as erect as if tied to a stake.

"That man's asleep," said one;

"He's as blind as a bat," said another;

"I reckon he's sort o' dead," exclaimed a third:

"He rides an elegant nag," remarked a fourth; and all were surprised that a man, who was apparently so good a judge of a horse, had not wit enough to see where he was going, or to know who were around him.

In the mean while our traveller moved proudly on, until he reached the best inn; a fine brick building, presenting every indication of neatness,

comfort, and even luxury. As he rode up, two well fed athletic negroes, with visages like polished ebony, and teeth as white as snow, rushed forth, and while one seized his bridle, the other held his stirrup as he dismounted. Still the automaton relaxed not a muscle ; but drawing up his body, moved majestically towards the house. At the door he was met by the landlord, a portly well dressed man, with a fine open countenance, who had been honoured by his fellow citizens with several civil appointments, and had even commanded some of them in the field, in times of peril. He touched his hat as he welcomed the stranger, and invited him into his house with an air of dignity and hospitality. A servant took his surtout, and several gentlemen who were seated round the fire, pushed back their chairs to make way for the stranger. But all these things moved not the automaton ; the glazed eye and compressed lip were still fixed, and the chin remained in the cushion of an immense cravat. After a momentary pause, the gentlemen in the room resumed their conversation, the landlord applied himself to the business of his house, and the silent traveller was consigned to the oblivion which he seemed to covet ; and excited no more attention except from an honest backwoodsman, who strolled in to take a peep, and after gazing at him for a quarter of an hour, suddenly clapped his hands, and exclaimed to his companion, " It moves, Bill !

if it a'nt alive, I'll agree to go a-foot as long as I live."

By this time candles were lighted, and the silent gentleman seemed to grow weary of silence. He now rose and strutted across the apartment with a very important stride. He was a young man of about two and twenty ; of ordinary height, and less than ordinary thickness. His person seemed to be compressed with corsets, and his head was supported by the ears upon a semicircle of stiffened linen, which occupied the place of a shirt collar ; and all his habiliments announced him to the eyes of the curious, as a genuine specimen of that singular *genus*, the dandy. After taking several turns through the apartment, he drew forth his gold repeater, and opening his mouth for the first time, exclaimed in a peremptory tone, "Landlord ! I want supper!" "You shall have it, sir," said the landlord, with a bow, and winking at the same time at the other guests, "we had supped when you arrived, but will not detain you many minutes."

In a short time, supper was announced, and the stranger was shown into a back room, handsomely furnished, where a neat elderly matron presided at the head of a table, spread with tea, coffee, bread, cakes, beef, pork, bacon, venison, fowls, and all that profusion of eatables with which western ladies delight to entertain their guests. Near her sat a young lady, modestly attired, in the bloom of youth and beauty, whose easy manners and engaging ap-

pearance, might have warmed any heart not callous to the charms of native elegance. Now, indeed, our dandy opened both mouth and eyes to some purpose. Scarcely deigning to return the salutation of his hostess, he commenced the work of havoc—fish, flesh, and fowl vanished before him; his eye roved from dish to dish, and then wandered off to the young lady; now he gazed at a broiled chicken, and now at the fair niece of the landlord—but which he liked best, I am unable to say—the chicken seemed to *go off* very well, but on the subject of the damsel he never opened his mouth.

Returning again to the sitting apartment, he found the same set of gentlemen whom he had left there, still engaged in conversation. They were the judge, the lawyers, and other intelligent men of the country, who were not a little amused at the airs of our dandy. Again they opened their circle to receive him, but his eyes, his mouth, and his heart, if he had one, were closed against every thing but the contemplation of his own important self. After drawing his boots, picking his teeth, and puffing a segar, he again opened his mouth, with, “Landlord! I want to go to bed!”

“Whenever you please, sir.”

“I want a room to myself, sir!”

“I do not know how that will be,” replied the landlord, “my house is full, and I shall be compelled to put you in the room with some of these gentlemen.”

"I can't go it, sir!" replied the dandy, strutting up and down; "never slept in a room with any body in my life, sir! and never will! must have a room, sir!"

The landlord now laughed outright at the airs of the coxcomb, and then said, very good humouredly, "Well, well, I'll go and talk with my wife, and see what we can do."

"My dear," said the landlord, as he entered the supper room, "here's a man who says *he must* have a room to himself."

"What, that greedy little man, in corsets?"

"The same."

"Set him up with a room!" exclaimed the landlady.

"He is a trifling fellow," said the landlord, "but if we can accommodate the poor little man, we had better do so."

The lady professed her readiness to discharge the rights of hospitality, but declared that there was not a vacant apartment in the house.

"Give him my room, aunt," said the pretty niece, "I will sleep with the children, or any where you please." The young lady was a visitor, and a great favourite; and the elder lady was altogether opposed to putting her to any discomfort, particularly on account of such a rude man. But the niece carried her point, and arrangements were made accordingly.

In a few minutes, the silent man was conducted by the landlord to a very handsomely furnished

apartment in the back part of the house. Every thing here was of the best and neatest kind. A suit of curtains hung round the bed, the counterpane was white as snow, and the bed linen was fresh and fragrant. The dandy walked round the room, examining every thing with the air of a man who fancied his life in danger from some contagious disease, or venomous reptile. He then threw open the bed clothes, and after inspecting them, exclaimed, "I can't sleep in that bed!"

"Why not, sir?" enquired the astonished landlord.

"It's not clean! I can't sleep in it!" repeated the dandy, strutting up and down with the most amusing air of self importance, "I wouldn't sleep there for a thousand dollars!"

"Take care what you say," said the landlord; "you are not aware that I keep the best house in all this country, and that my wife is famed for the cleanliness of her house and beds!"

"Can't help it," replied the dandy, very deliberately surveying himself in a mirror, "very sorry, sir—awkward business to be sure—but to be plain with you, I won't sleep in a dirty bed to please any man."

"You won't, won't you?"

"No, sir, I will not."

"Then I will make you," said the landlord, and seizing the astonished dandy by the back of the neck, he led him to the bed, and forced his face down upon it—"look at it," continued the enraged

Tennessean, "examine it—smell it—do you call that bed dirty, you puppy!" Then going to the door, he called to a servant to bring a horsewhip; and informed the terrified dandy, that unless he undressed and went to bed instantly, he should order his negro to horsewhip him. In vain the mortified youngster promised to do all that was required of him; the landlord would trust nothing to his word, but remained until his guest was disrobed, corsets and all, and snugly nestled under the snow-white counterpane.

It was nearly breakfast time when the crest-fallen stranger made his appearance in the morning. To his surprise, his steed, who had evidently fared as well as himself, stood ready saddled at the door. "Pray, sir," said he to his host, in a very humble tone, and in a manner which showed him at a loss how to begin the conversation, "pray, sir, at what hour do you breakfast?"

"We breakfast at eight," was the reply, "but the question is one in which you can have little interest; for you must seek a meal elsewhere."

"Surely, my dear sir, you would not treat a gentleman with such indignity——."

"March!" said the landlord.

"My bill——."

"You owe me nothing; I should think myself degraded by receiving your money."

In another moment, the self-important mortal, who, the evening before, had ridden through the

town with such a consciousness of his own dignity, was galloping away, degraded, vexed, and humbled. As he passed along, the same backwoodsman, who had gone to ascertain the fact of his vitality on his first arrival, met him, and pulling off his hat, said, very civilly, "Stranger, your girth is under your horse!" The dandy reined up his steed, jumped off, and found that his girth was indeed under his horse—where it ought to be.

"Do you mean to insult me?" exclaimed he, turning fiercely upon the backwoodsman; but the latter, instead of replying, coolly remarked to his companions, "If it an't alive, I'll agree to be shot;" and walked on.

"Who is that young man?" enquired the judge of the circuit court, as the stranger rode off.

"He is a Philadelphia dun," replied the landlord.

"I am no wiser than before," said his honour.

"Have you lived in our country so long, and not know this race of men? Sir, they are the collectors, sent out by eastern merchants, to collect their debts. Although they come from different cities, they all go under one general denomination; some of them are fine young men, but too many are like yonder chap."

"But how do you know this to be one of them?"

"Oh, bless you, I know them well. I read the history of that youth, in his motions, before he was in my house five minutes. One year ago he could

bow and smile like a French dancing master, skip over a counter, and play as many tricks as a pet monkey. He is just out of his apprenticeship, promoted to the dignity of a dun, and mounted on a fine horse, and you know the old proverb, "set a beggar on horseback—"

"I understand the whole matter," replied the judge, and very gravely walked into the house, while the younger members of the bar were roaring with laughter at this odd adventure of the Philadelphia dun.

THE BEARER OF DESPATCHES.

Shortly after the defeat of the British army at Fort Erie, in the brilliant *sortie* planned and executed by General Brown, that officer received intelligence that General Izard was on his way to join him with a large force. A few weeks sooner, this intelligence would have been highly gratifying. The American army, hemmed in by a foe whose numbers more than quadrupled their own, had been placed in an embarrassing situation. The fort was situated on low flat ground, and the season being very wet, the constant tramping of so many men had converted the whole place into one great mud puddle; the garrison who were lodged in tents, were exposed to continual rains; there was no spot secure from the elements, and a dry vestment, bed, or blanket, was, at times, not to be found within our line of sentinels; while the frequent alarms, and

the necessary "watch and ward" left only intervals for that broken slumber which refreshes not. But little pay, if any, had been received during the campaign—money there was absolutely none—and our diet was necessarily confined to the ration of meat and bread, which was not of the best kind. The perpetual shower of cannon balls and bursting of bomb-shells was not a matter of complaint, for this was soldier's luck ; to be shot at was our vocation ; and as we failed not to amuse ourselves at the batteries during a part of every day, we had, at least, the satisfaction of believing that our fallen companions would not, like Scipio's ghost, "stalk unrevenged among us." But nestling in the mire, and starving and coughing our lungs away, were matters which had not entered into our contract with the government, and on which our commissions, as well as the "rules and articles," were silent. It was not so "nominated in the bond." Why could not Uncle Sam send us food, and physic, and a few lusty fellows to help us fight ? Where there are no superfluous men, every one who falls leaves a niche ; and while we beheld our little force gradually wasting away, it was provoking enough to reflect that our country was full of men, some of whom abused us, some laughed at us, a few praised and none assisted. I may add, that the foe had vowed our extermination, and on one occasion had marched up to our batteries, filling the air with the dreadful war cry—"no quarter—no quarter to the d—d Yankees!!"

and that noble spirit of emulation, that generous contention, and courteous interchange of kindly offices upon proper occasions, which should exist among civilized armies, were all swallowed up in the deep hate excited by the cold-blooded cruelty of the enemy. As war, disease, and the doctor, daily thinned our ranks, it seemed evident, that unless supplies should arrive, we must become the victims of that unrelenting barbarity, of which our fellow citizens, on various occasions, have had sufficient experience. Our country, however, still forgot us, and I know not what would have become of us, had it not been for one kind-hearted gentleman. He was a Quaker gentleman; and the Quakers, you know, are famed for benevolence. Slipping out of the Fort one day, about noon, when John Bull never dreamed of such a matter, he dexterously cut off about a third of their army, and by that "free use of the bayonet," which the British commander had recommended upon a recent occasion, he saved his own credit, and the throats and scalps of his men, who filled the air with acclamations. The enemy, completely defeated, retired; and General Brown, not having force enough to pursue, could only make his bow, and wish them good bye.

At this juncture a despatch arrived, announcing that General Izard had left Plattsburg; was to embark at Sackett's Harbour, and passing up the lake, touch at the mouth of the Eighteen Mile Creek, whence his course would be directed, in a great

measure, by the intelligence he might receive from General Brown. It was desirable, therefore, that he should be met at that point by an officer from Fort Erie, who could advise him of the exact situation of the garrison, and the relative positions and strength of the two contending armies, and convey the communications of General Brown. A young artillery officer was accordingly summoned to the general's quarters, and after receiving the necessary instructions, he was ordered to get himself in readiness to set out immediately. "General Izard must be met," said the commander, "at the hour he has appointed: can you reach the place by that time?" "Oh, yes, certainly, sir," replied the young artilleryman, "though I must confess that I neither know the route nor the distance." The General smiled, named the distance, hastily indicated the route, and reminding his envoy that there was barely time left to accomplish the journey by the most rapid riding, wished him a pleasant jaunt.

The Bearer of Despatches crossing an arm of the lake, which separates Fort Erie from Buffalo, repaired to the quarter master to procure a horse, and being well mounted, departed early in the afternoon of the same day. Two routes were presented to his choice; the one was the main road which led by Batavia, and was too circuitous to be travelled within the allotted time; the other was an unfrequented, but more direct path, which, leading in the neighbourhood of Fort Niagara, then in possession of

the enemy, was fraught with danger : but it was necessarily chosen. A large cloak disguised the person of our soldier, concealing his arms and military insignia ; and he hoped under the cover of night, to pass the vicinity of the Fort unobserved. By rapid riding he reached the neighbourhood of Schlosser a little before sunset, and being unwilling to approach Queenstown early in the evening, he checked his horse and rode leisurely along. Cooped up, as he had been, he now enjoyed with an exquisite relish the luxuries of pure air, exercise, and liberty. His route lay along the margin of the Niagara river, which now separated him from those glorious fields which had been so recently drenched in gore, and in which American valour had been so conspicuously displayed. A few weeks before, he had passed along the opposite shore in all the fervour of youthful hope and military pride, surrounded by the pomp and circumstance of glorious war, by the tumult and glitter of an army with flying colours, and drums and hearts beating. Now the solitary horseman rode alone ; the breeze bore not the accents of men, nor did the distant echo whisper danger in his ear, but his eye dwelt upon scenes of interest ; well known spots occasionally glanced upon his vision : here an army had been encamped, there a battle fought, and under those trees slept many a companion ! The last rays of the sun fell upon his back, and the trees threw their gigantic shadows along the path before him. At such an hour the eye is most

delighted with the beauties of a wild landscape, when the nooks, and glens, and secluded places begin to darken into the gloom of twilight, while the sun-beams still glitter on the hills and tree-tops, or sleep upon the waves. The Niagara was rippling along its rocky channel, murmuring and fretting as it rushed towards the precipice, over which its descent causes one of the sublimest objects in nature. These circumstances all combined to wrap the heart of the traveller in sweet and pleasing meditation; and he rode on, enjoying those dreams, which, creeping imperceptibly into young hearts, hold the imagination entranced in delight; in irresistible delusions, full of rapture, variety, and beauty. The hour was witching, the scene picturesque, the very air melodious; and the realities around him became mellowed, and softened, and spiritualised into airy creations of the fancy. The mind, warmed into romantic feeling, gave its own hue to the surrounding objects; rude and familiar things took to themselves wings and flew away; vulgar associations were banished; the scenery disposed itself into shapes and shades of beauty; bright and varied colours fell upon the landscape; creatures of fancy peopled the shade, and the breeze murmured in numbers.

Our officer halted a moment at Schlosser to make some enquiries relative to his route, and learning that a countryman had just passed along, whose homeward path led in the very direction desired, he determined to profit by his company and guid-

ance. Spurring his steed, therefore, he rode rapidly on. Near the Falls, he overtook the boor, plodding heavily along. He was a man whose general outline announced him to be of the middle age; but his visage placed him in the decline of life. Dissipation had probably anticipated the palsying touch of time, had wrinkled his face, and slightly tinged his hair with the frosty hue of winter. His bloodshot eyes gave proof of habitual intemperance; but there was speculation in them, and a vile speculation it was; it was the keen, cunning, steady glance of one who in his time had cut, shuffled, and dealt, who could slip a card, and knew where the trumps lay. With this was mingled the dulness of an illiterate man, and the good humour of one who was willing to be amused, and meant no harm to others. Saving the besetting sin above alluded to, and perhaps the occasional passing of a counterfeit bill upon strong temptation, a small matter for a frontier man, he might have been a right honest fellow; one who knew the courtesies and good feelings of life, passed the cup merrily, would do a neighbourly act when it came in his way, never beat his wife when he was sober, nor troubled his children when they kept out of his way. Such at least was the estimate which our young soldier formed of his companion, during their subsequent ride together, to which it is only necessary to add, that he seemed to have recently parted from good liquor, and to have attained that precise point of elation,

which is well understood in every polite circle by the phrase, *a little high*.

When the two riders encountered, they scrutinised each other with that jealous caution which commonly passed between strangers who met in those dangerous times, in the vicinity of the hostile armies. The cautious question and the guarded answer passed mutually, until each had learnt as much as he could, and disclosed as much as he pleased. Our officer announced himself as a storekeeper, who had been to the army to make a traffic with the suttlers, having failed in which, he was now returning home in haste, by a route which he was told was nearer than the main road, and wished to get that night to a place called ———. The countryman lived at that very place, was now going home, although it was still upwards of sixteen miles distant, and he said he would be glad of our traveller's company.

They reached the Falls while daylight yet lingered over the awful abyss, and the officer, who had beheld this wonderful sight from the opposite shore, proposed to his companion to halt, that he might survey it under a new aspect. The latter, who seemed in no haste, cheerfully complied, and even seemed pleased with the opportunity of acting the Cicerone, and detailing all the wonderful tales extant, in relation to the great cataract. He did not, it is true, relate that surprising fact which Goldsmith has recorded, and Morse has copied from him, *i. e.*

that the Indians descend these rapids in their canoes, in safety; because, notwithstanding this circumstance is vouched for by two celebrated doctors, great amateurs in rivers, winds, and mountains, the vulgar give it no credit, and the natives deny it. Strange infatuation, that the assertions of philosophers should not be believed, in preference to our own erring senses and crude notions of probability! When our officer mentioned this story to his guide, he exclaimed, "Impossible! the man's sartainly cracked!" And had he told the same individual that Dr. Mitchel had said that a whale was not a fish, he would have expressed a similar astonishment; so incredulous is ignorance, so unwillingly does it bow to science and research. For my part, I make it a rule never to quarrel with a philosopher, and am therefore willing to admit that it is not only a safe but a remarkably salubrious and amusing recreation to paddle a canoe down the Falls and back again.

Leaving this spot, the officer was conducted by his guide to another object of admiration. A short distance below the cataract, the river, rushing along with the immense velocity acquired by being precipitated from so great a height, suddenly strikes a perpendicular precipice, which juts boldly into the stream from the American side, and the current thus thrown abruptly to the left, creates a whirlpool, which is not the least among the curiosities of this region. The officer advanced to the edge of the

cliff, and gazed in silence on the foaming current and its overhanging banks, now dimly discovered through the gray twilight. His reveries were broken by his companion, who narrated a melancholy tale connected with the scene of their contemplation. Many years ago, when all of this country was in possession of the British, a detachment of troops, having under their convoy a number of families with their furniture and baggage, were overtaken by night in this vicinity. They still proceeded, however, in hopes of reaching the forts below. But the French and Indians had formed an ambuscade at this very spot, and just as the devoted party were passing along the brink of the precipice, the savage foe rushed on them with hideous yells. Those alone who have heard the soul-thrilling cry of the Indian warrior, who have heard it breaking through the gloom of the night, with all its horrible accompaniments, with the wail of infants, and the shrieks of women, with the groans of the dying, the prayers and curses of the living, those only can conceive the horror of such a moment. In vain the troops endeavoured to resist—the tomahawk was drenched in blood—the European heard the dreadful war-cry, and felt that it was his knell; he received the fatal blow from an unseen hand, and had not the stern pleasure of beholding his antagonist, but fell without the gratification of avenging his death, or the honour of defending his life. Still the foe pressed on; with the war-whoop were mingled loud

shouts of triumph and the laugh of demoniac exultation; the soldiers gave back, the horses, panic-struck, fled from the din of battle, and in a moment were precipitated into the yawning gulf; men, women, and children followed, and the whole of this unhappy party slept that night under the wave. "It is said," continued the informer, "that their spirits may still be seen of a moonlight night, dancing in circles in yonder whirling place, where the water goes round so rapidly—and now, see there! what is that?" The officer looked in the direction designated by the finger of his companion, and beheld a black object in the whirlpool, rising a foot or two above the surface of the water, circulating rapidly with it, and gradually approaching the centre, until it was swallowed in the vortex. He could easily imagine that the trunks and boughs of trees, floating down the current, might be drawn into the pool, and whirling round with the velocity of the water, might assume an upright position, and present the appearance which alarmed the inhabitants, and gave probability to their conjectures. I have never been altogether satisfied with this sophism of my friend. It is not possible at this time to ascertain the true character of the apparition which he beheld, nor is it my business, as a faithful historian, to risk my reputation by giving a positive opinion upon the subject: yet I must remark, that I have no reason, nor had my military friend any, to induce a belief that this was not as genuine and as honest a ghost as

ever was beheld by mortal eyes. The fact is, that this young gentleman had lately seen so many of his fellow mortals despatched prematurely to their graves, that his mind had become familiarised with death, and in his dealings with substantial dangers he had acquired a contempt for unreal shadows. I am glad, however, to be able to add that he had the discretion to conceal his scepticism from his fellow traveller, to whose remark he gravely replied, "that human bodies when not decently buried seldom rested in peace, but that he had never heard of their doing any harm." His companion assented to the truth of this sagacious remark, and they pursued their journey.

These conversations having banished reserve, and the companions beginning to grow into confidence with each other, the officer ventured to enquire how near their route would lead to Fort Niagara, and learnt that they must pass within a short distance of that fortress. Concealing his sense of the danger which this information implied to his person and mission, he said carelessly, "Well, I suppose they will not disturb peaceable travellers?" "Sometimes they do, and sometimes they don't," was the reply. "Do they ever get out as far as your little village?" "Oh, yes, often." "And how do they behave there?" "Bad enough, bad enough," and he then proceeded to narrate a number of particulars, showing how these petty marauders destroyed their property, insulted their women, and

bullied their men, adding to the most monstrous acts of cruelty and oppression, the meanness of picking locks and pilfering trifles. It was by no means a matter of pleasing reflection to the Bearer of Despatches, that he must rest that night, if he rested at all, under a roof subject to these domiciliary visits : but he had other causes of uneasiness. It is well known that all the inhabitants within reach of an English garrison, who are capable of corruption, become corrupt. English gold, which is but a bugbear among the virtuous, presents a tempting lure to the loose and unprincipled inhabitants of a frontier, who can scarcely be said to belong to any country ; and our armies sometimes encountered spies and traitors, where they had fondly hoped to find friends. On this occasion, our officer, who had incautiously placed himself under the guidance of a stranger, began to feel, as darkness gathered around him, that he had acted imprudently, as the latter could as easily conduct him to Fort Niagara as to a place of safety. He concealed his suspicions, and determined to act warily.

It was dark when they reached Lewistown, a little village which had been entirely reduced to ashes by the enemy. The moon, which now shone brightly, disclosed the solitary chimneys standing amidst the ruins, the fruit-trees surrounded by briars, the remains of enclosures, and all the marks of desolation. A more beautiful situation could scarcely be imagined, but it was now a wilderness. Here they took a path which led them from the river. A

thick forest now overshadowed them, and they proceeded in silence and wrapped in impenetrable darkness, except at intervals, when they reached the summit of a hill, and the moon shot her beams through the branches. It was only by seizing such opportunities to watch the progress, and mark the exact position of this friendly luminary, that our officer, by forming some estimate of the course he was pursuing, could judge of the fidelity of his guide. They passed an encampment of the Tuscarora Indians, where all was dark and silent; and about midnight arrived at the place of destination, which, though characterised as a village, was composed of only two or three log cabins. To one of these, which was dignified with the name of a public house, our traveller was conducted by his companion, who apologized for not inviting him to his own house, owing to the lateness of the hour, and the want of accommodations.

Mine host, though called from his bed, cheerfully assisted his guest in putting away his tired horse, and then led him through a room where three or four rough two-fisted fellows lay snoring with their feet to the fire, to a chamber on the upper floor. Supper he declined, as well from policy, as from want of appetite; and having secured the door, and laid his pistols under his pillow, he gathered his cloak around him, and threw himself on the bed. From a light slumber he was waked by a low murmur of voices in the apartment below, to which the precariousness of his situation induced him to listen with

an intense and thrilling interest. Then a footstep was heard upon the stairs ascending slowly towards his apartment, and in a moment afterwards the latch was cautiously raised. He rose, seized his arms, and walked across the floor; the footstep retired, the voices ceased below, and all was silent. Our officer loved his life as dearly as other men, but it will only be attributing to him on this occasion the feelings of his profession, to suppose that he felt more anxiety for his honour, and the success of his enterprise. His broken slumbers yielded but little refreshment during the remainder of the night; and before the first gray streak illumined the eastern horizon, he arose, and stole forth with noiseless steps, passed the snoring borderers, and in a moment breathed the free fresh air. His horse was soon equipped, and mounting, he rode to the door, summoned his host, who was the first to hear his loud halloo. Surprised to find his guest in the saddle, he made no reply to his repeated demand to know his fare; but stepping forward, laid his hand upon the bridle. "Hands off, my friend," said the soldier, "my horse is ticklish about the head." "Light, sir, light!" said the host, "and take a dram before you go, it's a raw morning,"—and still held the rein. At this moment other faces appeared at the door; the officer liked neither their company nor their looks, and dropping a piece of money at the landlord's feet, he struck the spurs into the side of his steed, and dashed off in a gallop, leaving all danger behind.

THE VILLAGE MUSICIAN.

The reader who has ever been in the pleasant town of Herkimer in New York, may know something of Johnny Vanderbocker, a neat, square built Dutch lad, who was a great favourite among the ladies of that place, a few years back. The reason of his popularity with the fair, I could never exactly learn ; for he was the most uncomely youth that a traveller could meet between Albany and Buffalo. Perhaps it might have been in consequence of his expectations ; for his father, who was a baker, was said to have several hundreds of silver dollars, locked up in an oaken chest which stood by his bedside ; and as he had always permitted John to roam about the village, without paying the least attention to his education or conduct, it seemed very evident that he intended to make him his heir. Perhaps it might have been owing to his good nature ; for to tell the truth, there was not a better tempered lad

in the whole country. Whatever else might be said in disparagement of John, all admitted that he was a well conditioned creature, and had not the least harm in him. He would lie for hours, under the shade of a great willow which stood before his father's door, looking at the sky, or crawl about the grass, hunting for four-leaved clover ; and no change in the weather, nor other cross accident, was ever known to disturb his serenity. In this respect he was a fair example of the influence of circumstances ; for, having been *raised*—as we say in the west—by a baker, it was naturally to be expected that his heart should be *light*.

After all, he might owe his favour with the female public to his musical abilities, which were certainly remarkable. When quite small, he was an adept at playing on the Jews-harp, and the boys and girls would crowd around him to listen to his melody, as if he had been another Orpheus. As he grew older, he took to the violin, and his services began to be in request. A man may always fiddle his way through this world ; no matter whether he play for love or money, whether he is a hired musician, or an amateur ; fiddling is a genteel, popular, and profitable employment. Johnny was now a regular and an acceptable visiter at all the tea parties, quiltings, and house raisings, in and around the town, and never did any human being fill a station with more propriety, than he did the responsible post of fiddler. By nature he was

taciturn, a lover of sleep, a healthy eater, and fond of an inspiring beverage; qualifications which, if they be not proofs of musical genius, may at least be set down as the appropriate accomplishments of a connoisseur in the science of sweet sounds. Seated in an easy chair, for he loved a comfortable position, he would throw back his head, close his eyes, open his huge mouth, and fiddle away for a whole night, without exhibiting the least sign of vitality, except in his elbow and his fingers. Often when a dance was ended, he would continue to play on until admonished that his labours were unnecessary; but when a new set took the floor, it was only requisite to give Johnny a smart jog, and off he went again like a machine set in motion. When refreshments were brought him, he poured into the vast crater which performed the functions of a mouth, whatever was offered; and more than once has he swallowed the contents of an inkstand, smacked his lips over a dose of Peruvian bark, or pronounced a glass of sharp vinegar "humming stuff."

Thus passed the halcyon days of Johnny Vanderbocker, until the completion of his twenty-first year, when an event occurred which entirely changed the tenor of his life. This was no other than the decease of his worthy parent the baker, who was suddenly gathered to his fathers, on a cold winter evening while Johnny was fiddling at a neighbouring fair. The news startled our hero

like the snapping of a fiddle-string. He returned with a heavy heart to his paternal mansion, and retired to rest somewhat consoled by the reflection, that although he had lost a parent, he had become *master of the rolls*. He laid aside his amusements to follow the remains of the honest baker to their last receptacle. For a wonder, he remained wide awake the whole day, and slept quietly in his bed the whole of the ensuing night. On the following morning he unlocked the oaken chest, emptied the contents of several greasy bags on the floor, counted them over eagerly, and then determined—to buy a new violin.

In his new situation, many cares pressed upon the attention of our hero. Letters of administration had to be taken out, the stock in trade and the implements of his ancestor to be sold, debts to be collected, and debts to be paid; and before a week elapsed, the heir at law acknowledged that the gifts of fortune are not worth the trouble they bring. His new suit of black imposed an unwonted constraint upon him. He could no longer roll upon the grass, for fear of soiling his clothes, and he was told it would be wrong to fiddle at the dances while he was in mourning.

When an old man gets into trouble, he is apt to betake himself to the bottle; when a young one becomes perplexed, he generally turns his attention to matrimony. Thus it was with Johnny, who, in those golden and joyous days, when he

had nothing to do but to sleep and eat and play the fiddle, never dreamed of the silken fetter. But when care and trouble, and leather bags, and silver dollars, and black broadcloth, came upon him, he thought it high time to shift a portion of the burthen of his existence upon some other shoulders.

I must now apprise the reader, that although my hero had never thought of marriage, it was only because he was too single-minded to think of two things at once. He had not reached the mature age of one and twenty, untouched by the arrows of the gentle god. In love he had been, and at the precise point of time to which we have brought this veracious history, the tender passion was blazing in his bosom, as kindly and as cheerfully as a Christmas fire. Its object was a beautiful girl of nineteen, who really did great credit to the taste of the enamoured musician. She was the daughter of a widow lady of respectable connections, but decayed fortune—the damaged relic of a fashionable spendthrift. Lucy Atherton, the young lady in question, had beauty enough to compensate for the absence of wealth, and a sufficient portion of the family inheritance of pride to enable her to hold her head quite as high as any belle in the village. Indeed, she made it a point to take precedence wherever she went, and as she did this without the least appearance of ill nature, and without displaying any self-important airs, but rather as a matter of course, it seemed to be univer-

sally conceded to her. She was the reigning beauty of the village—the prettiest, the gayest, and the most graceful of the maiden train who danced to the music of Johnny Vanderbocker's violin. In the dance she was grace personified. It was a treat to behold her laughing face, her lovely form, and her light step, as she flew with joyous heart and noiseless foot through the mazes of the contradance. Now it happened to Johnny occasionally to shut his mouth and open his eyes, just at the dangerous moment when Miss Atherton was engaged in these captivating performances, and he must have been the most churlish of all Dutchmen, not to have been fascinated. She was in the habit, too, of leading off the sets, and the choice of the air was generally dictated by her taste. On such occasions she would address our hero with the most winning grace, and in tones of the sweetest euphony, ask *Mr. Vanderbocker* for “that delightful tune which he played so charmingly.” Accustomed to the appellation of plain “Johnny” from every other tongue, the title of *Mister*, conveyed in such honeyed accents, fell pleasantly upon his ear, and whether the fair lady was actuated by self-respect, or by a respect for Johnny, the effect was to make him her fast friend. The fact was, that Miss Atherton had an art, which some ladies exercise as skilfully as some gentlemen, and which is found among distinguished belles as often as among ambitious men;—I mean that universal courtesey

which gains for its possessor the good will of all ranks—that ready smile, and pleasant phrase, and convenient bow, which, like a panacea, suits all occasions. In statesmen this desirable accomplishment is the result of judicious training; in handsome women it is an instinct, connected with that love of applause, which is almost inseparable from beauty.

Often would Johnny surprise the company, by keeping his eyes open for whole minutes together, as the lovely vision of Lucy Atherton flitted before him. The fire would flash from his eye, and the blood rush from his heart to his elbow, as he gazed in ecstasy at the loveliest dancer in the village—his fingers fell with renewed vivacity upon the tuneful strings, and the very violin itself seemed to melt in sympathy, and gave forth softer, and mellow, and gayer tones. Then would he close his eyes, and having laid in an agreeable idea, feed upon it in secrecy, as a stingy boy devours a dainty morsel in some hidden corner. With his stringed instrument rattling away like a locomotive engine, apparently unconscious of any animal propulsion, his mouth wide open, his visage devoid of expression, and the whole outward man reposing in death-like torpidity, he was dreaming of Lucy Atherton—his heart was beating time to the imaginary motion of her feet, as her form floated and whirled, up the sides and down the middle, cross over, and right and left, through every nook and

corner of his bosom. But either because this image was too dearly cherished to be shared with another, or too faintly shadowed out to be altogether intelligible to himself, he kept his own counsel so closely, that none could have suspected the object of his thoughts, or have pronounced with the slightest shadow of reason, that he had any thoughts at all—except upon one occasion, when Miss Lucy Atherton having gone through a *scamper down* with uncommon spirit, he exclaimed with great emotion, that she was “a dreadful nice dancer.”

Yet with all this devotion of heart, and with feelings that vibrated to every echo of Lucy's feet, there was not a single chord of association in the mind of Johnny Vanderbocker, which connected the image of Miss Atherton with the idea of wedlock. On the contrary, having seldom seen her except on high days and holidays, when she shone as a bright peculiar star in the constellation of village beauty, her name was engraven on the same tablet on which was recorded his agreeable recollections of in-fairs, quiltings, fiddle-strings, minced pies, egg-flip, and hot spiced gingerbread. All these good things came together, and with them always came—Lucy Atherton. When therefore the notion of a wife came into his head, it was like the intrusion of a comet into the solar system, disturbing the regular economy of nature, and eclipsing the other orbs by its brilliancy. It entirely unset-

tled the well-ordered succession of his thoughts, which commonly moved on from point to point as regularly as the hands of a watch. "A wife!"—quoth he, casting a look of silly bashfulness all around, as if afraid of detection—"A wife!"—exclaimed he a second time, laughing aloud as at the absurdity of such a proposition—"A wife!"—muttered he again,—and then the image of Lucy Atherton came dancing before him. The greatest discoveries have been the result of accident, the happiest invention is but the felicitous application of a known power to a novel purpose; and equally fortuitous was that train of thought in the mind of our hero, which united his own destiny with that of the fashionable and admired Lucy Atherton. The thought was ecstatic; it brought a glow to the heart of Johnny, such as seldom beams upon the high latitude of a Dutchman's breast, and he resolved to become, forthwith, a candidate for the hand of the village belle.

Great designs give unwonted energy to the character. Idle and timid as our hero usually was, the idea of marrying Lucy Atherton awakened him to a new being. His conceptions were enlarged, his resolution quickened, and all his senses strung anew, and he was as different a man from what he was an hour before, as a stringless violin is, from the same instrument properly attired and screwed into tune. He felt his importance increased, his notions of happiness expanded, and his whole sphere

of existence extended and beautified. He considered the matter settled. "Me and Lucy will just suit," said he to himself. "She dances *prime*, and I take it, I can outfiddle the world." It never occurred to him that the lady would make any objection to the arrangement.

How could she? for Johnny was possessed of the only two things which he considered absolutely necessary to enjoyment; music and money. What more could a lady want? "And then," thought he, "I'm not the worst-looking fellow in the country, and this is not such a bad house neither, and three hundred dollars, and the bake-shop, is no trifle." Johnny capered round the room in great glee, and one of his companions coming in at this moment, he embraced him, and said, "Don't you wish me joy?"

"For what?" enquired his friend.

"O I'm so happy!"

"Is it your father's death that pleases you so much?"

"O no! I'm going to be married."

"Indeed! Who to?"

"Ah, that's a secret; I ha n't told *her* about it yet, but I know she'll have no objection."

The next morning found our hero at a neighbouring shop, purchasing a variety of trinkets and clothing, for the decoration of his ungainly person. A purple watch ribbon, a pink silk neckcloth, and a huge breastpin which struck him as peculiarly

tasty and appropriate, were borne off in triumph and these, together with a scarlet velvet waistcoat, of the proper goods and chattels of the late Herman Vanderbocker deceased, which came to the hands of the said John to be administered, were severally arranged in their respective stations; and the worthy amateur, adorned with a dazzling elegance, to which he had until that time been a stranger, placed his fiddle triumphantly under his arm, and marched boldly to the dwelling of the widow Atherton.

It is necessary to explain in this place, that in calling our hero a *fiddler*, we have never meant to insinuate that he played for money. He was as much above such mercenary considerations, as any other lover of the fine arts. He was an amateur. That delicate discrimination of sounds, which enables its happy possessor to arrange the vibrations of coarse strings and fine ones into harmony, and that love of melodious tones and skilful combinations, which distinguish the musician, and of which the writer of this history has not the faintest conception, all belonged to Johnny. He was a welcome visiter at all the parties in the village, because he played cotillions and contra-dances with "accuracy and despatch," and moreover not only rendered such services gratuitously, but with the utmost good humour. Whoever else was omitted, on any such occasion, Mr. Vanderbocker was sure to receive a formal card, or a hearty invitation, as

the case might require. Of course he was received as an equal in every circle, and had access to the best society in the village; a privilege which he seldom used, but which permitted him on the present occasion to tap at the door of Mrs. Atherton with the air of a familiar friend.

"Good morning, Mrs. Atherton," said our hero, as he entered the widow's parlour, "Good morning. How 's Lucy?"

The lady, surprised at this unwonted familiarity in the son of the village baker, raised her spectacles, and having gazed at him for a moment in mute astonishment, haughtily replied that Miss Atherton was well. Johnny was glad to hear it; but before he could express his joy, the offended parent stalked out, and the young lady herself glided in. "She don't know what I came for, or she 'd be more civil," thought Johnny, as he looked after the proud widow—but the entrance of the daughter changed the current of his reflections.

"How d' ye do, Lucy?" said the amateur.

Lucy was thunderstruck. The young man had never before addressed her in such a strain; but she had too much self-possession to betray the least embarrassment; for a reigning belle can generally command her feelings with as much success as a veteran politician. She returned his salutation, therefore, with the utmost sweetness and ease of manner, and took her seat, inwardly resolving to penetrate into the cause of the strange revolution

which a few hours had made in the dress and address of her visiter. Arrayed in the simple elegance of a morning dress, and adorned with youth, health, and beauty, she bent gracefully over her work, and never looked prettier than at this moment, when an inquisitive archness was added to the usually intelligent expression of her countenance. For the present, however, her curiosity was balked; for Johnny, who really meant only to show his tenderness, and had already advanced to the utmost bounds of his assurance, began to falter. The courage, which had sustained him thus far, and which some have insinuated was borrowed from a source that our temperance societies would hardly approve, was fast evaporating; and after sitting some time in silence, playing with his purple watch-ribbon, he drew his violin from its green bag, and enquired whether Miss Atherton would "fancy a tune."

The young lady declared that it always afforded her infinite pleasure to listen to Mr. Vanderbocker's delightful music; and in an instant the musical machine started into action—the head fell back, the mouth yawned, the eye-lids closed, and Johnny, the best and drowsiest of fiddlers, added a new proof, that even the tender passion is not sufficiently powerful to overcome inveterate habit. But love did not entirely quit the field, or abandon his votary, who opened his eyes at intervals, and bowed and smirked upon his fair auditress in a

manner not to be mistaken, while between the different airs he would enquire if the last tune was not "*cruel purty*," or "*desparate fine*," or "*elegant-er than all the rest*."

Music, which has charms to "soothe the savage breast," seems to have operated differently on that of the young lady on this occasion; for the antique velvet vest, the pink neckcloth, the smirking, the bowing, and above all, the short naps which her visiter seemed to enjoy with such complacency, were altogether so irresistibly ludicrous, that in spite of her endeavours to suppress it, she was compelled to burst into a fit of laughter. Johnny, who very properly considered this as an unequivocal expression of delight, was overjoyed at his success, and adding his own *bass* to the melodious *tenor* of his fair companion, shook the room with peals of obstreperous mirth.

Thus ended the first act of this comedy. The second commences with a sprightly dialogue. Johnny, who had now found his tongue, opened the conversation by asking "Lucy" if she did not think he ought to be married.

"Undoubtedly, Mr. Vanderbocker," was the reply; "nothing could be more proper; provided you believe that marriage would conduce to your happiness."

"I do n't know as I should be any happier, but somehow I think I should be better contented."

"Then you ought certainly to marry, for con-

tentment is the chief ingredient in the cup of happiness."

"I shall quit drinking entirely," continued the lover, who misunderstood the last position of the lady.

"I am glad to hear it. Sobriety is very becoming; particularly in married men."

"And who do you think I ought to have?"

"O dear! I cannot tell, indeed. That is a delicate question; and perhaps it might be necessary to determine first who would *have you*."

"I guess, a'most any of 'em would be glad to catch at me," replied the swain; "for father 's left me a snug house, and three hundred dollars in silver, besides the bake-shop."

"Quite a fortune, I declare!" exclaimed Lucy.

"To be sure there 's some that 's richer than me, and some better looking," continued Johnny, glancing at the mirror which hung opposite to him; "but then you know, Miss Lucy—"

—"That half a loaf is better than no bread," added the young lady, ironically.

"Yes—just so—that 's my *idée* to a notch, a half bread, as you say, is better than no loaf, and so—three hundred dollars and a house and lot—"

"And gentle Mr. Vanderbocker into the bargain, would be a comfortable *lot* for any lady. Surely the girls in Herkimer ought not to hesitate, for the temptation is very great!"

"An't it?" exclaimed Johnny, in a tone of exul-

tation. "I guess it is!" he added, answering his own question. "It is n't every gal that gets such a chance. Now I 'll tell you a secret," continued he, lowering his voice—"if *you* 'll have me, it 's all your own, me and the fiddle, the three hundred dollars, the bake-shop, and all!"

"The impudent fellow!" thought Lucy; but she had the politeness and good sense to suppress that thought. A lady is never seriously offended with the swain who offers to marry her; for however humble may be the source from which the proposition emanates, it is still a compliment. Lucy's list of conquests was tolerably long for blooming nineteen, and the name of Johnny would add but little dignity to the train; yet truth obliges me to record that a slight blush, and a very slight toss of the head, with a glance at the mirror, showed that the tribute of admiration was not unwelcome even from our hero. She civilly, but peremptorily declined the honour which he had intended for her, and adding, "You must excuse me now, sir, I have other engagements," left the room.

"Other engagements!" thought Johnny, "that means that she is going to be married to somebody else. What a dunce was I not to speak first!" And he retired, deeply chagrined, and not a little puzzled, that a young lady of marriageable age and sound discretion, who was not worth a cent, should refuse a neat cottage, a bake-shop, and three hundred dollars, with the slight incumbrance of himself

and a violin, for no better reason than that she had made a previous engagement with another gentleman!

Had there been a mill-pond at Mrs. Atherton's front door, our hero would undoubtedly have drowned himself; and it is altogether probable that he would even have gone out of his way to seek the means of self-destruction, had he not prudently reflected that the estate of Herman Vanderbocker, deceased, was not yet fully administered, nor the leather bags emptied. To leave this treasure vacant, and the bake-shop unoccupied, would have been rashness. But he felt unhappy. His heart, which had been as *light* as a hot roll, was now as *heavy* as dough; and being little disposed to mingle in company, he determined to mount his horse, and take a short ride. How far he went, or what he thought of, I am unable to say, as I dined that day with Mrs. Atherton, and spent the afternoon in assisting her lovely daughter to draw patterns, a fact which will account for my intimate knowledge of the events of the morning.

It was nearly night, when Johnny, who was trotting briskly homewards, overtook a stranger within a mile or two of the village. He was a tall, slim man, mounted on a high, strong, bony horse; but he was so muffled up, from top to toe, that our hero could not tell whether he was old or young, gentle or simple. His hat was covered with an oil-cloth, his legs were enveloped in ample wrap-

pers of coarse cloth, he was booted and spurred, and over all he wore one of those uncouth but comfortable coats, fabricated out of a green Mackinaw blanket, which are so common on the Mississippi. His horse was covered with mud, and evidently tired. His own appearance was way-worn, and weather-beaten. He seemed to have travelled far, and faced many a storm. Before him were a pair of large holster pistols; behind him, a roll containing his surtout and umbrella; and across the saddle, a pair of immense saddle bags, fastened with a brass padlock.

Johnny, who had all the fiddler's wonted love of company, and was particularly averse to riding alone in the dark, trotted up along side of the stranger, and accosted him with a cheerful "Good evening."

The traveller nodded stiffly, without deigning to turn his head.

Johnny gazed wistfully at the jaded rider, the tired nag, the Mackinaw blanket, the leggins, and other *fixens*, as we say in the West, and wondered who this could be, that was so strangely accoutred, and was too proud to return a civil salutation. Determined to satisfy his curiosity, he tried to commence a conversation, by making some commonplace remark about the weather; but, as this elicited no other reply than a cold monosyllable, he resolved to make a bold push, and come to the point at once.

"You seem to be travelling, mister," said he.

"You have guessed right," replied the traveller.

"Have you travelled far, if it's a fair question?"

"Tolerably."

Now this reply seemed to our hero most perplexingly inexplicit. "Tolerably" might comprise ten miles, or twenty, or a hundred, but it could not apply to a long journey. He took another look at the *leggings*, the pistols, and the green blanket coat, and, edging up to the stranger, thought he would try it again.

"Well, mister," said he, "if I *mought* make so bold, where did you come from?"

"Just back here," was the laconic reply.

"From Oneida?"

"No; further back."

"From Cataraugus?"

"No; further back."

Johnny considered a moment—for his stock of geographical knowledge was but slender—and again pushed his enquiries.

"I guess, may be, you came all the way from Buffalo?"

"No; further back."

Johnny scratched his head, in some amazement, and edged off from the stranger, as if fearful he had fallen into bad company; but his curiosity overcoming every other feeling, he continued;—"Why I don't know as any body lives any further off than that. If I *mought* make so free, what's back of Buffalo?"

"Ohio."

"O—o—h! yes! sure enough! So you live in Ohio?"

"No; further back."

"Well, what's back of that?"

"Indiana."

"And do you live there?"

"No; further back."

"And what's back of that?"

"Illinois."

"Oh! you live in Illinois."

"No I don't."

"Where *do* you live?"

"Further back."

"I guess you don't live at all!" exclaimed Johnny trembling all over, for it was now growing dark, and the tall stranger, who seemed to have ridden so hard and so far, appeared to deny being an inhabitant of this world. But Johnny thought he would try another question.

"Well, mister, if it's no harm, what's back of Illinois?"

"Missouri."

"Do you live there?"

"Yes."

Johnny absolutely started, and stood up in his stirrups, and a cold chill ran over him; for the conversation was brought to a dead stand by this reply, with a shock resembling that with which a steamboat, under rapid way, is checked by a snag.

But he had *located* the stranger ; and, after drawing a long breath, he exclaimed—

“ Well, I’m glad on’t. I am almost out of breath in finding it out. I don’t know how you stood it to travel so far ; it must be a long way off. How far is it, sir, if it’s a fair question ?”

“ Something over a thousand miles. And now,” said the stranger, “ as I have answered all your enquiries, I hope you will allow me to put a few questions to you.”

“ O certainly.”

“ Do you live in this village ?”

“ Yes—I was born here.”

“ What’s your business ?”

“ I’m a gentleman.”

“ What does your father do for a living ?”

“ Nothing.”

“ What is he ?”

“ He is a dead man.”

“ Do you know Mrs. Atherton ?”

“ Yes—do you ?”

“ Is her daughter married ?”

“ No, indeed, far from it.”

“ Why far from it ?”

“ She refused an excellent offer this morning.”

“ From whom ?”

“ That’s a secret.”

“ How do you know this if it is a secret ?”

“ I had it from herself. But here is the hotel, I’ll bid you a good evening.”

"Stay. Have you any objection to carry a note to Miss Atherton?"

"I can't say as I have."

"Well, then, as she seems to have made you her confidant, I will entrust you with one." So saying, he stepped into the tavern, and in a few minutes returned with a neat billet, which he put into the hands of Johnny, requesting him to be particularly careful to deliver it to Lucy herself.

Proud of an office which would introduce him into the presence of her who had occupied so large a share of his thoughts, he departed with alacrity, but meeting with some of his companions, who detained him, sorely against his will, more than an hour elapsed before he reached the dwelling of Mrs. Atherton. That lady and her fair daughter were seated, *tête à tête*, at their work-stand, when a modest knock was heard at the door, and in a few moments the crest fallen Johnny Vanderbocker stood before them. Bowing reverently to both ladies, he advanced in silence, and laid the note before Lucy, who at first took it up with hesitation, supposing that it contained an effusion of the bearer's own hopeless passion; but no sooner had the superscription caught her eye, than she tore it open, and exclaimed, "He is come, he is come! Mother, mother! he is come!"

"Who is come?" enquired Johnny, whose feelings were too much excited to permit him to remain silent. But Lucy's head had fallen upon her

mother's shoulder, and the tears were rolling down her cheeks, while the good lady's eyes were also filled.

"Never mind," said Johnny, in a soothing tone; "don't be scared, ladies. If he *does* carry horse pistols, he is not a going to do as he pleases in Herkimer. Don't, don't cry, Miss Lucy—I'll fight for you as long as I can stand." At this juncture, the door again opened, and the stranger stood before them. The blanket-coat fell from his shoulders, and Lucy Atherton rushed into his arms. "Dear Lucy!" "Dear Charles!" was all they could utter. Mrs. Atherton glided out of the room. "The old lady does not like you either," thought Johnny; "she served me just so."

"Three are poor company," continued Johnny to himself, and he too retired; but he had the consolation of believing that he had found a complete solution of the mystery of the young lady's conduct in the morning. "She would never," he argued, "have refused me, and three hundred dollars, and the bake-shop, if she had n't been engaged already. She was sorry about it, no doubt, though she did pretend not to mind it. Dear me, what a pity! the poor thing laughed so, and was so overjoyed when I went there a-courting to-day, and now this great backwoodsman has come from nobody knows where, to carry her off. Well she knows her own business best. Three hundred dollars won't go a begging long in Herkimer. So good-bye to Lucy Atherton."

But manfully as our hero strove against his disappointment, it preyed upon him, and for two days he remained in his own house quite disconsolate, moping about like a hypochondriac, and poking the fire with the petulance of a bachelor who is past hope, or—past forty. At the end of that time he received an unexpected visit from the stranger. Stripped of his blanket-coat and leggins, and disarmed of those ferocious weapons which had excited our hero's curiosity so strongly, he seemed another person. Although somewhat above the ordinary stature, his person was slender and genteel, his face, which was browned by exposure to the weather, was remarkably handsome, and his address frank and easy. His age might have been two or three and twenty, but having already mixed with the world, and felt the touch of care, he had the manners of an older man. "Mr. Vanderbocker," said he, "you guided me into the village the other evening, when I was tired and perhaps less sociable than I ought to have been, and I have called to thank you for your civility, and to request the pleasure of your company on to-morrow evening at Mrs. Atherton's." Johnny pleaded his black coat, and tried to beg off; for he had heard it whispered that Lucy was to give her hand to the handsome stranger, and felt but little inclination to be present at the wedding. His visiter, however, pressed him, adding, "Miss Atherton esteems you as one of her earliest friends, and will have it so." "I will go then," said Johnny, greatly soothed by

this compliment. "And now, Mr. Wilkinson," for such he had learned was the stranger's name, "will you be kind enough to tell me how you managed to court one of our Herkimer ladies, without ever setting your foot in the village—our belle, too, that has had so many good offers at home?" Mr. Wilkinson smiled, and replied, "Lucy and myself met at Schenectady, where we were both going to school, and were well enough pleased with each other to agree to unite our destinies. Her father was but recently deceased, and she was supposed to have inherited a fortune, while my own circumstances were such that it was with difficulty I completed my education. Mrs. Atherton might possibly have taken these things into consideration; at all events, her views differed from ours, and she no sooner heard of our attachment than she took Lucy home, and, rather haughtily as I thought, forbade my visiting at her house. Poor Lucy! her fortune turned out to be illusory. Her father had died a bankrupt, and left his family so destitute, that Mrs. Atherton had to struggle with many difficulties. Though they have kept up a genteel appearance, I fear they have sometimes wanted even the necessities of life. But Lucy lived through it all with a gay heart, and a noble spirit, and refused, as you remark, many a good offer. As for me, I went to the West, mortified at having been spurned from the door of a proud woman, and determined to earn that wealth and distinction, which I saw could

alone procure my admittance into the bosom of Lucy's family. I went, friendless and pennyless, to the shores of the Mississippi, where not a heart beat responsive to my own, and where I was exposed to many hardships and dangers. But I was so eminently successful in business, that I am already independent, and able to claim the fulfilment of her promise. There is no objection now on the part of either mother or daughter, and, to-morrow evening, I shall become the happy possessor of Lucy's hand."

"You deserve it," said Johnny, sobbing, "indeed you do—for, simple as I seem, and simple as I be, I 'm not the lad to envy a true lover and a generous-hearted girl their happiness. But do you intend to take her 'further back?' " added he, pointing significantly to the West.

"Yes, that is my home now."

"Good luck to you both, then. I will certainly attend the wedding; and if father had been dead a little longer, I would play for you, that I might see Miss Lucy dance for the last time. Yes, it would be the *last time*. Never *will* I see such another figure on the floor. And never shall any other woman dance to music of mine. I 'll hang up my fiddle. There will be nobody in the village fit to play for when she is gone. I have played my last tune; and I shall now do as my father did—bake bread, and lock up my dollars in the old oak chest."

Johnny kept his word. Several years have passed, and he may now be seen any summer's day, seated at the door of his cottage, with a red night-cap on his head, and a short black pipe in his mouth, chuckling over the idea that he has more hard dollars under lock and key than any man in the village. He bakes excellent bread, gives good weight, and drinks nothing but his own beer, while the sound of a violin, or the smile of a woman, never gladdens his roof, and

"The harp that once in Tara's halls
The soul of music shed,
Now hangs as mute on Tara's walls,
As if that soul were fled."

FASHIONABLE WATERING PLACES.

A person of taste may spend a few days very pleasantly at a genteel Watering Place. The continual succession of new faces, the interesting variety of character, and the harmonious intermixture of grades exhibited here, are such, that the mind of desultory man, however studious of change, cannot fail to be amused. I say nothing of the beauties of the landscape, the invigorating breeze of the country, or the medicinal virtues of the mineral fountain—because the last may be imitated in perfection by a bungling apothecary, and the others are easily purchased by the fatigue of a morning ride from the most crowded metropolis. Those vulgar enjoyments which are within the reach of the whole human race, are very properly disdained by persons of fashion. Much has also been said of the keen appetites which are found at these healthful places of resort. Portly gentlemen,

and pale-faced ladies, exult equally in the quantity of fish, flesh, and fowl, which the talismanic effects of the sea breeze or the chalybeate draught enable them to consume. But this is surely false taste. What can be more ungentle than eating, or rather devouring, flesh and vegetables like the locusts of Egypt, or the lean kine of Pharaoh? Can that be styled a polite employment which is common to the philosopher and the savage, the belle and the washerwoman? Eating is certainly a vulgar occupation—and I cannot but marvel that wits and beauties—"the curled darlings of the nation"—should hie to Long Branch or Ballston, for the purpose of gratifying that voracious propensity which gives celebrity to the boa constrictor, and the man who swallows tallow candles for a wager! The preacher condemns the epicure who "fares sumptuously every day;" and the physician lives by repairing the inroads of the cook. Besides, we certainly know, that the literati of every age have deplored the appetite for food as the most impertinent and vexatious of the human propensities. That it has caused many an honest gentleman to turn author, cannot be disputed; and that it has peopled Parnassus with gaunt forms and hungry aspects, is equally unquestionable. Gentlemen, therefore, who write for bread, should not go to Watering Places. For my part, I have always viewed this subject with the eye of a philosopher, and have never ceased to deplore the inflexibility

of that ordinance of our nature, which bestows the best appetites upon those who are least able to supply them. Physicians display a most unfeeling apathy to the sufferings of their fellow creatures, when they inconsiderately administer provocatives to the palate of every one who fancies himself deficient in voracity, without enquiring into the ability of the patient to sustain and cherish the newly awakened sense. If I was a practitioner of the healing art, I would ask my patient if he was a poet, and if he answered in the affirmative, I should congratulate him upon the delicacy of his appetite, and positively forbid the "exhibition" of tonics. I would conscientiously regulate the appetites of those who had the good fortune to be placed under my care, by the dimensions of their purses. Thus my patients would be rated, like ships of war, by their weight of metal; he who could compass three full meals a-day, with a lunch at noon and a hot supper at midnight, should ruralise at Bedford or Saratoga, and have bark and wine to his heart's content; a less plethoric purse should be placed on allowance; and where the income was in a low state of debility, meagre diet and nauseating draughts should be prescribed. But as it seems natural that the force of reason should forbid men from pursuing that which, when obtained, would be burthensome, I am in the habit of believing all the visitors whom I meet at Watering Places to be persons of fortune, who purchase pleasure with their superfluous

wealth, or seek appetites because they have wherewithal to gratify them.

But a watering place has other uses and attractions. Dashing blades may lawfully resort thither to sport their equipages, and beauties to display their charms. Southern gentlemen find the flavour of a mint julep greatly enhanced by the refreshing coolness of the mountain spring, and city ladies bloom like wild flowers in these salubrious retreats. Your watering place is, moreover, a notable school for good manners; for, as the parties are for the most part strangers to each other, all are free and equal; and thence results that absence of constraint and ease of manner, which is so much admired in high life. There is no herald's office kept here. Here is no balancing of straws, and weighing of feathers—no tossing of heads, and winking, and whispering, to find out *who is who*. One gentleman may wear blue, and another black, but “a man's a man for a' that”—and as every man may place his own name on the books with whatever title or addition he pleases, he has only to choose his own rank, and he passes current accordingly. “Misery,” it is said, “brings us into strange company”—so does misery's opposite, pleasure. Here are singular combinations, not to be explained by any of the established rules of affinity, attraction, or cohesion.

To the lover this is a congenial climate. Is it not strange that a sympathy should exist between the palate and the heart? Will my fair and gentle

readers believe that love and hunger—the one a gross vulgar appetite, the other a genteel, delicate, sentimental passion—may be awakened and invigorated by the same stimulants? It is even so. The air of the country is alike salubrious to a feeble frame, or a debilitated attachment. The sight of haystacks, and waving corn, and flowery meads, creates a sweet delusion around the intoxicated senses of the lover, and peoples the fairy scene with nymphs and swains, and all the delightful paraphernalia of pastoral love. Mineral water is as nutritious to the heart, as it is invigorating to the body. Why is it that the young lady

Whose soul blithe Cupid never taught to stray
Beyond the coxcombs who infest Broadway,

no sooner gets to Ballston, than her ambition soars to nobler objects; and she, who a few days before submitted patiently to the addresses of a *dandy*, now aims at the subjugation of a manly heart? No wizard ever invented a love-inspiring potion so potent as the medicated fountain; but to which of the elements that enter into the composition of the chalybeate draught this effect is to be attributed, I am at a loss to determine. If I were a chemist, I could account for the phenomenon, because a chemical genius is never at a loss for a theory, and dives into causes with an expertness which, by no means, depends upon any previous or present knowledge of the subject. He who deals in *retorts* can solve any question—though not always by the

retort courteous. I once, indeed, attempted to philosophise upon this matter myself, and achieved a moral analysis after the manner used and approved by the chemical professors. I carefully examined the various properties of a celebrated spring, and in a few minutes arrived at a conclusion quite as satisfactory as the results of ordinary experiments. "Here is magnesia," said I, "which corrects acidity, and which by a sympathetic influence upon the mind converts a sour old maid into a well conditioned miss, and neutralising the acerbities of the bachelor's temper, leaves his mental system in a healthful state, well suited to the reception of soft and agreeable impressions. And here is sulphur, which, combined with 'villanous saltpetre,' commits such havoc in the world under the name of gunpowder. Can ladies who imbibe sulphur water and gunpowder tea, be otherwise than inflammable? Is it any wonder that maidens who take in such combustible materials should 'go off' with any spark with whom she comes in contact? Then here is iron—mercy preserve the dear girls! what a collection of mortal engines! what fatal implements of destruction are here assembled!—an artillery officer would be quite at home in such a magazine of ordnance stores. We have only to convert this iron into steel—let it act mechanically upon the flinty heart of the lady, and is it any wonder that Cupid should *strike fire*, or Hymen light a *match*?" Such was my theory, and I will vouch

it to be as correct as many of the systems in which the scientific repose implicit faith. If it has not more good sense than the theory of specific gravity, I will forfeit my ears—provided a future generation be allowed to decide the question. But whether I am right or wrong, I shall still exclaim, “if mineral water be the food of love, drink on!” and that it is, will, I think, be satisfactorily proved by the following little history. I have suppressed the real names of the parties, but the facts will be instantly recollected by those of my readers, who have been in the habit of visiting the celebrated spot where they occurred.

Miss Simper appeared at Saratoga in an elegant suit of sable. She was said to be in mourning for her father, an opulent broker in Baltimore, recently deceased. Grief had wasted her health, and weeping had washed away her roses, and she was come to recover her appetite, and re-animate her blushes. Miss Simper, of course, was an heiress, and attracted great attention. The gentlemen called her a beauty, and talked a great deal of her real estate, bank stock, and securities. Some of the ladies thought her complexion too sallow, and some objected to the style of her dress. Mrs. Highflyer said she had not the air of a woman of fashion, while Captain Halliard pronounced her a suspicious sail, and declared his belief that she was a privateer in disguise. The fair stranger, however, walked daily to the fountain, modestly cast

down her eyes when gazed at, and seemed unconscious of all but her own honours.

About this time Major Fitzconnel appeared upon the busy scene. He was a tall, handsome man, of easy address, and polished manners, who seemed to regard all around him with an air of very polite unconcern. He was announced as an officer in his Britannic Majesty's service, and brother to Earl Somebody in England. It was reported that he had large landed possessions in the west. He did not appear to seek society, but was too well bred to repel any civilities which were offered to him. The gentlemen were well pleased with his good sense, his knowledge of the world, and the suavity of his manners; but as he seemed to avoid the ladies, they had little opportunity of estimating his qualities.

Major Fitzconnel and Miss Simper met by accident at the fountain. The officer, who had just filled his glass at her approach, presented it to the lady, who, in sipping the transparent element, dropped her handkerchief. ● The gentleman very gallantly picked up the cambric, and restored it to the fair hand of its owner—but the blushing damsel, abashed by the easy attentions of an elegant stranger, in her confusion lost her reticule, which the soldier gracefully replaced upon her wrist, with a most respectful bow. A curtesy on the one side, and another bow on the other, terminated the civilities of this meeting. The gentleman pursued his

walk, and the lady returned to her chamber. That Miss Simper felt duly sensible of the honour of having elicited three graceful congees from the brother of an English earl, cannot be doubted; nor can we suppose, without injustice to that gentleman's taste, that he saw with indifference the mantling blushes which those attentions had drawn forth; certain it is, however, that as they separated in opposite directions, neither of them was seen to cast "one longing lingering look behind." As I had not the privilege of intruding into either of their chambers, I cannot say what fairy forms might have flitted around the magic pillow, nor whether the fair one dreamed of coronets, coats of arms, kettle drums, and epaulets. In short, I am not able to inform the inquisitive reader, whether the parties thought of each other at all; but from the extreme difficulty of again bringing two such diffident persons in contact, I am inclined to think the adventure would have ended here, had not "chance, which oft decides the fates of mighty monarchs," decided theirs.

Miss Simper's health required her attendance at the fountain on the following morning at an unusually early hour; and the major, while others were snoring, had sallied forth to enjoy the invigorating freshness of the early breeze. They met again by accident at the propitious well; and as the attendant, who is usually posted there to fill the glasses of the invalids, had not yet taken his station, the

major had not only the happiness of performing that office, but of replenishing the exhausted vessel, until the lady had quaffed the full measure prescribed by the medical dictator of this little community. I am not able to say how often they pledged each other in the salubrious beverage; but when the reader is informed that the *quantum* prescribed to a delicate female varies from four to eight glasses, according to the nature of her complaint, and that a lady cannot decorously sip more than one mouthful without drawing breath, it will be seen that ample time was afforded on this occasion for a *tete-a-tete*. The ice being thus broken, and the water duly quaffed, the gentleman proposed a promenade, to which the lady after some little hesitation acceded; and when the great bell summoned them to breakfast, they repaired to the table with excellent appetites, and cheeks glowing with healthful hues, produced by the exercise of the morning.

At ten o'clock the lady issued forth from her chamber, adorned with new charms, by the recent labours of the toilet, and strolling pensively, book in hand, to the farthest corner of the great piazza, commenced her studies. It happened, at the same moment, that the major, fresh from his valet's hands, hied himself to the same cool retreat, to breathe forth the melancholy musings of his soul, upon his flute. Seeing the lady, he hesitated, begged pardon for his intrusion, and was about to

retire—but the lady assured him it was “no intrusion at all,” and laid aside her book. The gentleman was soon seated beside her. He begged to know the subject of her researches, and was delighted with the taste displayed in the choice of her author; she earnestly solicited a display of his musical talents, and was enraptured with every note;—and when the same impertinent bell which had curtailed their morning walk, again sounded in their ears, they were surprised to find how swiftly time had flown, and chagrined that the commonplace operation of eating was so often allowed to interrupt the feast of reason and the flow of soul.

At four o'clock the military stranger handed Miss Simper into an elegant gig, and drove to the neighbouring village;—where rumour soon proclaimed that this interesting pair were united in the holy bands of matrimony. For once the many tongues of fame spoke truly—and when the happy major returned with his blushing bride, all could see that the embarrassment of the lover was exchanged for the triumphant smile of the delighted bridegroom. It is hardly necessary to add that such was the salutary effect of this pleasing event, that the “young couple” found themselves restored instantaneously to perfect health; and on the following morning they bade adieu to Saratoga springs.

“This is a very ungenteel affair!” said Mrs. Highflyer. “I never *heard* the beat of it in my

born days!" said a fat shopkeeper's lady. "How funny!" cried one young lady. "How shocking!" exclaimed another. "Egad, that 's a keen smart girl!" said one gentleman. "She 's a tickler, I warrant her!" said a second. "She 's a pirate, by thunder!" roared Captain Halliard.

In the mean while, the new-married pair were pursuing their journey by easy stages towards the city of New York. We all know "how the blest charms of nature improve, when we see them reflected," and so on; and we can readily imagine "how happily the days of Thalaba past by" on this occasion. Uninterrupted by ceremonious visits, unrestrained by the presence of third parties, surrounded by all the blandishments which give enchantment to the rural scene, it is not surprising that our lovers should often digress from the beaten road, and as often linger at a romantic spot, or a secluded cottage.

Several days had now elapsed, and neither party had made any disclosure to the other upon the important subject of finance. As they were drawing near the end of their journey, the major thought it advisable to broach this delicate matter to his bride. It was upon a fine summer evening, as they sat by a window, at an inn, enjoying the beauties of an extensive landscape, that this memorable conversation occurred. They had been amusing themselves with that kind of small talk which new married folks find so vastly pleasant: as how much

they love one another, and how happy they intend to be, and what a fine thing it is for two fond hearts to be dissolved and melted down into one, &c. Many examples of love and murder were related—the lady told of several distressed swains who had incontinently hanged themselves for their mistresses, and the gentleman as often asseverated that not one of those martyred lovers adored the object of his passion with half the fervour which he felt for his *own, dear, sweet, darling, precious little Anne!* At last, throwing his arm over his wife's chair, he said carelessly,

“Who has the management of your property, my dear?”

“You have, my darling,” replied she.

“*I shall* have, when I get it,” said the husband—“I meant to enquire, in whose possession it was at present?”

“It is all in your own possession,” said the lady.

“Do not trifle with me,” said the gentleman, patting her cheek—“you have made me the happy master of your person, and it is time to give me the disposal of your fortune.”

“My face is my fortune, kind sir,” said she, laying her head on his shoulder.

“To be plain with you, madam,” said the impassioned bridegroom—“I have need of money immediately—the hired gig in which we came to this place has been returned, and I have not the means to procure another conveyance.”

"To be equally candid with you, sir," replied the happy bride, "I have nothing in the world but what you see."

"Have you no real estate?" said the major, starting on his feet.

"Not an acre."

"No bank stock?"

"None."

"No securities,—no jewels,—no money?"

"Nothing of the kind."

"Are you not the daughter and heiress of a rich broker?"

"Not I, indeed."

"Who the devil are you, then?"

"I am your wife, sir, and the daughter of a very honest blacksmith."

"Bless me!" exclaimed the major, starting back with astonishment—then covering his face with both his hands, he remained for a moment, absorbed in thought. Resuming his serenity, he said, in a sneering tone, "I congratulate you, madam, on being the wife of a beggar like yourself. I am a ruined man, and know not whence to supply my immediate wants."

"Can you not draw upon the earl, your brother?" said the lady.

"I have not the honour of being allied to the nobility."

"Perhaps you can have recourse to the paymaster of your regiment?"

"I do not happen to belong to any regiment."

"And have you no lands in Arkansas?"

"Not an acre."

"Pray, then, sir, may I take the liberty of asking who you are?"

"I am your husband, madam, at your service, and only son to a famous gambler, who left me heir to his principles and profession.

"My father gave me a good education," said the lady.

"So did mine," said the gentleman—"but it has not prevented me from trumping the wrong trick this time."

So saying, Major Fitzconnell bounced out of the chamber, hastened to the bar, and called the landlord. His interesting bride followed on tiptoe, and listened unobserved. The major enquired "at what hour the mail stage would pass for New York." "About midnight," was the reply. "Please to secure me a seat," said the major, "and let me be waked at the proper hour." "Only one seat?" enquired the host. "One seat only!" was the reply. The landlord remarked that it was customary for gentlemen who set off in the night to pay their fare in advance, upon which the major paid for the seat.

The major and his bride retired to separate chambers; the former was soon locked in the arms of sleep, but the latter repelled the drowsy god from her eye-lids. When she heard the stage drive

up to the door of the inn, she hastily rose, and having previously made up her bundle, without which a lady never steals a march, hastened down stairs. Upon the way she met the landlord, who enquired if her husband was awake.

"He is not," said the lady, "and need not be disturbed."

"The seat was taken for you, then," enquired the innkeeper.

"Certainly."

"Oh, very well—we 'll not disturb the gentleman—the stage is ready, madam,—jump in." Mrs. Fitzconnell jumped in accordingly, and was soon on her way to New York, leaving the gallant and ingenious major to provide another conveyance, and a new wife, at his leisure.

THE USEFUL MAN.

Jemmy Gossamer was the only son of a reputable tradesman, who grew rich by his skill and industry in his business, and who might, with propriety, be said to have been a man of most excellent *habits*, for he was an eminent tailor. Perhaps I should have said a *men's mercer*, for it is a curious trait of human nature, that even those who are not too proud to labour, are often too vain to be called by their right names. In our republican country, and in an age when the operative classes are really achieving the proudest triumphs which adorn the page of history, it is singular to see the ambitious artifices, by which common occupations are attempted to be concealed under dignified names. Formerly, a shoemaker was content to be called cobbler, but now he is elevated into a cordwainer; a tinker is a tin-plate worker; and one half the blacksmiths in the country

have the title of engineer. So let it be : a name costs nothing, and does nobody any harm. But old Gossamer was one of those who cared very little what people called him, provided they *called often*, and were punctual in the payment of their bills. He sat on his shop-board from morning till night, and worked like a man—or, more properly speaking, like the ninth part of a man,—from the expiration of his apprenticeship, to the age of sixty-five. He grew rich apace ; and with wealth came a train of honours. He was made a bank director, a member of the city councils, and president of a fire company ; but so far from being seduced by these distinguished marks of public favour, he continued to flourish his scissors to the last, with unwearied assiduity, and with a humility which the brightest smiles of fortune never for a moment subdued. He seemed to have taken the measure of his own mind, and to have cut his coat according to his cloth.

It is a curious law of nature, or of society, that a father who reaps an abundant harvest of this world's prosperity, by means of his own honest exertions, is most usually very careful to prevent his son from following his example. It is not uncommon to see men spending long lives of usefulness and virtue, to no other end than that of rearing their offspring in the opposite vices. In the management of his business, Mr. Gossamer never showed any want of prudence or judgment ; but was always as sharp as a needle. The training of his son was another

affair. He could never bring himself to the belief, that his hopeful heir was cut out for a tailor; and as the youth showed no genius for any other calling, he wisely determined to breed him up a gentleman. There is no character more eagerly coveted in our simple republican land, than that of a *gentleman*. An honest farmer, or a mechanic, will work harder than a slave all his life, and deny himself a thousand enjoyments, in order to have the gratification of seeing his only son a gentleman. And what is a *gentleman*? In this country, if he is not less, he is certainly not more, than another. Gentility does not endow any man with a new faculty, or an exclusive privilege. A gentleman has all the wants, frailties, appetites, vices, and passions of other men, suffers under the same diseases, endures the same misfortunes, and dies the same death. He has but one life, but one vote, and cannot lawfully have but one wife. He must eat and sleep, wear clothes, cut off his beard, and take physic, as well as a clod-hopper. In other countries a gentleman is supposed to inherit, and transmit, a purer blood than that which flows in the veins of his fellow creatures; and he enjoys some privileges which amount to substantial advantages. But, alas! where is the man in our land—yea, even the proudest and most aristocratic, who can look back upon his ancestry, without stumbling upon a dingy blacksmith, a tricky pedlar, or a foetid apothecary; or can look forward to the career of his offspring, without, in his brightest

dreams, being forced to see some of them humbled to the most plebeian occupations? To be a gentleman, then, in the sense that we now use the word, amounts to nothing more than to be idle, and the title is a convenient one, to distinguish those who have no occupation, from the useful classes of society. It was so that Mr. Gossamer understood it. Having laboured hard all his life, he imagined that it would be a great privilege to live without work; and as his son would have an ample fortune, he determined that he should spend it as he pleased.

Jemmy was accordingly the best dressed youth in the town. He soon became a leader of the fashions; for whenever the old gentleman wished to introduce a coat of a new cut, or to astonish the sober natives with a flashy vest, he displayed the first pattern upon the neatly turned person of his favourite son, who was thus made to answer the purpose of a walking advertisement. By this sagacious process, two birds were killed with one stone; the skill of the father was made manifest to the public, while the son became the envy of all his companions.

Mr. Gossamer was not unmindful of the advantages of education, and was determined to procure for the hopeful youth who was to inherit his fortune, all the learning that money could buy. But that sprightly young gentleman soon discovered that schools and colleges were no places for him. Among modern innovations, that of writing the word "use-

fulness" over all the doors of science and literature, is one of the most conspicuous. Our hero soon discovered that learning was not considered as a polite accomplishment, but as an acquisition which was to qualify a man for the business of life. He was continually reminded of the practical value of different branches of knowledge, and of their connection with the occupations of men. The truth of course flashed upon his mind, with all the force of a syllogism—or, as his worthy progenitor would have expressed it, it was just as plain as the button on a man's coat—that learning was not necessary for a gentleman. The words "practical," "business," "usefulness," and the like, were associated in his mind with yard-sticks, paper measures, lumps of wax, dirty fingers, and other concomitants of the shop; and as he had wisely kept aloof from the latter, he was not aware of having any interest in the former. It followed that *useful* knowledge would be superfluous to him, who was not intended for an useful man, but a gentleman. The schools were abandoned, or only attended occasionally as a matter of form; his chief occupations were dressing, lounging in Chesnut street, playing billiards, and going to the theatre; and his studies were confined to newspapers, play-bills, Byron's poems, and Miss Fanny Wright's philosophy. Thus he grew in years and in gentility, and at the age of twenty-one, was thoroughly convinced that the highest dignity of man consisted in being fashionably clad, and

the highest enjoyment of life in spending money. About this time, the elder Mr. Gossamer, having snapped the thread of life, was gathered to his fathers, leaving his remnants to our hero.

The propitious hour was now arrived, when our hero was to reap the harvest he had so long anticipated, and for which his father had toiled through half a century. He was now lord of himself, and master of an ample fortune, and he expected forthwith to take his station among the A——'s and the B——s, and the C——s who were considered as tip-top people. But the A——s, the B——s, and the C——s had never heard of him, and to Jemmy's perfect astonishment, his father's death neither increased his dignity, nor enlarged the circle of his acquaintance. He tried to force his way into that society in which he longed to move, but was repulsed with the gentle hint, that he was not considered as a gentleman! Highly indignant at what he considered an unmerited aspersion upon his birth and breeding, he resolved upon the usual expedient in such cases—that of purchasing, by dint of wealth, admission into those circles from which he was excluded by his manners and education. He determined to marry, and set up a fine establishment. But, alas! what varied disappointments lie in wait for the aspirants after worldly honours! One lady refused him because he was a fop, another because he was illiterate and vulgar, a third sneeringly offered him the ninth part of her heart, and all

agreed that he was not a gentleman. "Not a gentleman!" exclaimed Jemmy, "that's a good one! I wonder what I am, if I'm not a gentleman? I'm not a *practical man*, nor a mechanic, nor an operative, nor one of those useful men that they make such a fuss about. I am not a philosopher, nor a scholar; no, nor a doctor, nor a lawyer—of course, I *must* be a gentleman. I have plenty of money, and nothing to do; and I take it I dress as well as any body. I must be *something*, and I don't know what I *can be*, unless I am a gentleman!" He applied to a friend for advice as to the best method of asserting his gentility.

"Write a book," said his friend, "authorship has got to be a very genteel calling."

"I can't go that—my genius doesn't lie that way."

"My dear fellow, that is all a mistake; it requires no genius to make a book, as books are now made. It only requires industry, a steady hand, and a sharp pair of scissors."

"That may be very true," replied our hero, "but industry is not a gentlemanly virtue; and as for a pair of scissors, I am surprised that you would mention so vulgar an instrument; I abominate the very name."

"Oh! I beg pardon; well, there is another plan; suppose you fight a duel."

"Don't mention it, my dear fellow. I have not nerves for that. Besides, I might be killed, and

then I should not be a gentleman, but only an 'unhandsome corpse.' No, I can't go that."

"You must travel, then."

"Travel! eh! where?"

"Any where you please; to the West, for instance."

"West; what, out Chesnut street? over Schuylkill?"

"Aye, over Schuylkill and Susquehanna, over the Ohio and Mississippi."

"Well, I like that! agreed! will you go? Come, let's be off; I want to be back by Monday, to Cooper's benefit."

His friend walked off, laughing; but our hero was not to be balked in his newly awakened ambition, and having made up his mind to travel West, and learnt that he could not possibly "be back by Monday," he very considerably determined to wait until after that day. Having made all the necessary enquiries and preparations, he resolutely took his seat in the stage, and commenced his journey.

Had it been a dozen years ago, he would have found few turnpikes, and those wretchedly bad; for nobody had yet found out that it was unlawful to make them. Every rock in the Alleghany ridge might have been broken to atoms, and every prominent feature in the face of the country amputated, without the slightest injury to the Constitution. Indeed, most people would have thought it a whole-

some operation. Be that as it may, the roads were not made, nor, until very recently, did any body seem to care about them. The politicians, after all, are the men to do business ; they are the " great magicians " who set every thing going. No sooner did they take the matter up, than not only all the land, and the rivers, but even public sentiment, began to be McAdamised ; and while one side denounced turnpikes as the roads to national ruin, and another extolled the making of them as the greatest of virtues, the people proceeded vehemently to that proof of the pudding, which the good old maxim pronounces the best. Notwithstanding all this, our hero soon discovered, that, even in these days of improvement, a journey from the Atlantic to the western country, is an adventure of no small magnitude. As there is ever something in the way, to retard our most innocent undertakings, so here are piles of hideous mountains, heaped up one upon another, until the highest not only intercepts the poor earthly traveller, but forces even the clouds, as they roll through the air, to turn aside, or to crawl heavily up the mountain to its summit. There is something sublime, and even consoling, in this idea ; and as the traveller winds his toilsome way up the mountain path, it is quite comfortable to reflect that thunder-gusts, as well as stage-coaches, must submit to be impeded by these tremendous barriers. As for Jemmy Gossamer, he thought nothing about it, but drew his travelling cap over

his eyes, and slept the more soundly as the carriage proceeded with less rapidity. One fact, however, in natural philosophy, he learned among the cliffs of the Alleghany ridge, as it was too obvious to escape even the notice of a gentleman, namely, that the world is not round like an apple, as he had been taught to believe, but as angular as a brickbat.

From Pittsburgh our traveller proceeded very comfortably, in a fine steamboat, to St. Louis, meeting with no adventures worthy of particular notice. He had previously sent to this place, by way of New Orleans, a very elegant dearborn carriage, which he properly imagined would carry his trunks, wardrobe, &c. and enable him at all times to appear like a gentleman. To this he now prefixed a fine horse, by means of a dashing set of plated harness, and thus equipped, he set forth one fine summer morning upon his travels in Illinois. He preferred this State, because he was told that the prairies were level, and destitute of trees. "I like that," said he—"bad things, these trees—don't have them in Chesnut street—city council had them all cut down on account of the catterpillars—wonder congress don't have the whole concern exterminated."

Our traveller was now driving over beautiful plains, in a thinly settled country, where his fine dearborn and dandy coat begat no small degree of wonderment among the natives. To the latter he had resolved to be very civil and condescending,

because he had heard that General Jackson, Mr. Clay, and other great men, were remarkable for their affable courtesy to the common people. As he rode leisurely along, he met a countryman, with a rifle on his shoulder, who hailed him with, "How are you, stranger?" at the same time stopping short, as if to invite a *tete-a-tete*.

"I hope I see you well, sir," returned Jemmy, reining up his horse, smiling his prettiest smile, and bowing his best bow.

"Travelling, stranger?" was the next question.

"Yes, sir, rusticating a little, as you may perceive."

"Which way are you going? if it's a fair question."

"Very fair—I'm bound north."

"Going to settle?"

"Can't say that I am. Just taking a tour of pleasure to recreate the body, and expand the mental faculties."

"What parts did you come from?"

"From Philadelphia."

"How do you like that country?"

"Philadelphia is not a country, my good friend, it is a city."

"Oh! it is a city! Is it a good place to live?"

"Better than this, a plaguy sight."

"Well, you don't say so! are the land thar, as good as this here?"

"Can't tell you—never saw any land in my life till I left home."

"Did you live in the water, if I mought be so bold as to ax?"

"No, I lived in town."

"Oh! you lived in town! likely, likely. What do you follow for a living?"

"Sir, I follow my own inclinations—I'm a gentleman."

"What might your name be?"

By this time Jemmy was growing impatient. He gave his whip a flourish, and replied with a sneer, "Why, it *might be* Julius Cæsar."

"Scissor!" exclaimed the hunter, slowly shouldering his rifle and turning away, "mighty poor scissors, too!" Jemmy cracked his whip, and dashed off in a passion, while the backwoodsman, looking drolly after him, muttered to himself, "Well if you aint the poorest chance, for a live man, that ever I saw, I'll agree to shoot nothing but a shot gun as long as I live!"

Mr. Jemmy Gossamer had not proceeded very far, when a jolly farmer, mounted on a sleek nag, overtook him, and very pleasantly saluted him. Jemmy bowed stiffly.

"Peddling, sir?" enquired the farmer.

"Do I look like a pedler?" exclaimed our hero, in high dudgeon.

"I meant no offence, stranger; I thought, from

the way you are *fixed off*, that you must have goods to sell."

"I would thank you, sir, to tell me what part of my equipage resembles that of a pedler."

"Well, stranger, I'd no notion of making you mad, for a pedler's just as good as another man; but that little *carry-all* that you ride in, favours the Yankee wagons they drive, mightily. And then you tote such a powerful heap of plunder, that I thought you must have goods to sell."

Our traveller drove along in no enviable state of feelings, vexed at having his fine carriage denominated a *carry-all*, mortally offended at hearing it compared with a pedler's vehicle, and dreadful indignant that he himself should be mistaken for a travelling merchant. "Was it for this," thought he, "that I came all the way to Illinois? Shall I never be duly appreciated? Has the whole world conspired to deny me the homage due to my great wealth? Will nobody recognise me as a gentleman?" Engaged in such reflections, he jogged along for an hour or two, when a young countryman, who was trudging along, with a bundle at his back, very civilly asked him to be kind enough to tell him the time of day. Soothed by the respectful manner of this address, he stopped, and drew forth his elegant gold repeater—"just twelve."

"Well, that are an elegant watch, I'll be consarned if it aint! Would you trade her, stranger?"

"I don't trade in watches, my friend."

"Oh you don't! Have you any powder?"

"What sort of powder do you mean?"

"Well I'm not partic'lar what sort; either glazed or rough will suit me, so it will shoot quick."

"I don't carry gunpowder in my carriage."

"That's a pity; you could trade a right smart of it in these parts. Have you tobacco?"

"How do you dare to ask me such a question?" roared our dandy, in violent indignation.

The young man looked at him in astonishment, and calmly replied, "I'm as white a man as you are. I'll ask what questions I please; if you don't like it, you can go ahead with your little go-cart."

Mr. Gossamer gave his horse a violent cut with his long lash, and dashed off at a gallop, determined to answer no more questions. But he was obliged to stop at a cabin, to get a drink of water, and had no sooner entered, than the good woman of the house informed him that her "youngest *datur* was powerful bad with the *misery* in her tooth," and enquired if "he had any *camfire*."

"I am no physician, my good woman."

"I did'nt reckon you was; you look too young for a doctor. Do you carry the mail, young man?"

From this eventful day forward, he gave up all hope of ever being received as a gentleman. He turned his horse's head eastward, and never stopped until he reached home,

"It won't all do," said he to his friend, "I have been taken for a pedler, for a travelling doctor, and

for a mail carrier. I could not pass for a gentleman in the wilds of the West, any more than in the circles of Philadelphia. There is some secret in it that I have not learned. One thing is certain, that money will not make a gentleman."

"What do you propose to do?"

"Oh, I cut the whole concern. I shall open the old man's shop to-morrow, take in a partner who can handle the shears, and become an operative."

"What! not a tailor!"

"Yes I will—I will so—I'll be hanged if I don't! I cannot be a gentleman—I must be something—I'll be A USEFUL MAN,"

THE DENTIST.

I am not aware whether the following story has been told before; nor is it any matter—if it has, my relation of it will have the effect of corroborating evidence, and if it has not, it will possess the merit of novelty. The circumstance which led to a developement of the whole affair, occurred in the shop of a respectable milliner in the village of R——. The worthy proprietor of this rural emporium of fashions, a maiden lady of fifty, stood behind the counter, as gay as a May morning, and as neat as if she had just stepped out of one of her own bandboxes. On the opposite side was a grave, middle-aged gentleman, who might have been buying a bonnet for his wife, or paying for finery for his daughters. His countenance was shrewd, though benevolent, and his appearance that of a professional man who was thriving in his business.

He was about to leave the shop, when a young girl who stepped in attracted his attention, and without seeming to notice her, he lingered, leaning upon the counter, and apparently absorbed in reading a newspaper. She was delivering some beautiful specimens of needle-work. While the milliner examined the patterns, the gentleman stood in a situation to have a full view of the face of the fair stranger, and was struck with its extraordinary beauty. Not only were the features and expression pleasing, and the complexion fine, but the rich glow of the cheek, the softness and intelligence of the clear blue eye, and the youthful brilliancy of the whole countenance, pointed out this young female as the possessor of more than ordinary attractions. But he was most surprised at the evidence of extreme poverty exhibited in the transaction before him. She was disposing of work, for a mere pittance, which must have cost her immense labour, and which showed accomplishments, such as the "labouring poor" do not ordinarily possess. Her own dress, though perfectly neat, and managed with care, was worn and faded, and entirely destitute of ornament. Every indication, except such as her face and form afforded, announced her to belong to the humblest rank of life, and to be then enduring the extreme of poverty. But what most particularly attracted his attention were her fine teeth, the most beautiful he had ever seen ; her coral lips, and a smile so engaging as even to give dignity and

sweetness to the petty transaction, in which she seemed to be so unsuitably employed.

The stranger, who evidently had some purpose in view in thus watching the motions of the young girl, seemed to be much embarrassed, and as she lightly tripped away, after disposing of her wares, it was with an air of respect, and some hesitation, that he followed her to the door and gently laid his finger on her shoulder. She turned hastily, and slightly curtesied; a blush suffused her cheek, but her calm eye met that of the stranger, with a glance that announced the self-possession of one accustomed to the world. He paused, as if uncertain whether to proceed; but he was a man not easily to be balked, and assuming a familiar tone, which his own age, and the youth, as well as the extreme indigence, of the person before him, seemed to justify, said,

“My pretty girl, have you nothing more to sell?”

“Nothing more, sir.”

“You do not know how rich you are,” continued the stranger, “let me make your fortune by purchasing some of your teeth.”

The young female recollected that her dress was of the coarsest kind; yet she felt offended at the familiarity of the stranger’s manner, as well as at a proposition which seemed to be intended as an unfeeling jest, and was about to pass on, when the stranger added,—

"I am quite in earnest, and would most gladly be the purchaser."

"Indeed!" replied the girl, "I cannot imagine, sir, why you should wish to purchase my teeth."

"If I am willing to give you your own price," said the stranger, very good humouredly, "it is not important for you to know my reasons."

The girl looked in the man's face, astonished at the oddness of his proposal. He was a person of respectable appearance, whose prepossessing countenance seemed to assure her, that he would not sport with the feelings of the unfortunate.

"I am in very serious earnest," he repeated, "for two of your lower fore-teeth, I will give you a price far beyond their actual value."

"That you are not jesting I am bound to believe," replied the girl, "since you say so; I am only surprised at the novelty of the offer."

"Perhaps you think it would be more natural to dispose of the whole set together, with *yourself* in the bargain," said the stranger, jokingly.

To his surprise, the young female made no reply; her unaltered features and calm eye seemed to say that she did not consider herself the fit subject of a jest, and had no reply to make to such ill-timed pleasantry.

The stranger saw his mistake, and regretted his unintentional rudeness. He had touched the feelings of a sensitive heart. "Pardon me," said he, "I meant no offence. To convince you of my

sincerity; I will tell you why I wish to make this purchase. I am a dentist, and reside in a neighbouring town. A patient of mine, a lady who is wealthy and handsome, but not quite so young as you are, has had the misfortune to lose two of her fore-teeth. She is inconsolable, and will not agree to have them replaced, except from the mouth of *a young, healthy, handsome girl*. Such are my instructions. None but the most beautiful teeth will be accepted. Yours are just the thing, and I am authorised to offer you five hundred dollars for two such as I shall select." The young female's surprise had kept her silent when she first heard this singular proposal; she smiled when it was seriously persisted in; but at last, when the *possibility* that she might accept it occurred to her, a cold chill ran through her frame, and pointing out her door to the dentist, she requested him to call upon her in half an hour, and hastily retired.

As the reader feels, no doubt, a laudable curiosity to be introduced to all the persons concerned in the interesting catastrophe which is to follow, I shall now present them separately to his notice. The first in point of importance, is a certain Mrs. Flowerby, who, when I can first recollect her, was *a middle-aged* widow lady, but who would have been very much offended to have had that description applied to her, even twenty years afterwards. She *had been*—some time or other, but I know not when—thought very handsome; and she thought herself

quite as beautiful as ever. She had a fine walk, a stately air, and dressed in the extreme of every fashion. We used to call her *Madame* Flowerby, and the boys sometimes nicknamed her "my lady"—epithets which incensed her greatly, inasmuch as she supposed that they had some allusion to her age, when in fact they were given in reference to her pride. Had she known this, it would have satisfied her; because, although people are ashamed of being old, few think it a disgrace to be proud or childish. The fact is, that Mrs. Flowerby was really a very genteel, and a very respectable woman, to look at—but not for any other purpose; for she was not overstocked with either good sense or good nature, nor do I know of a single valuable quality that she had, except to dress remarkably well, and to give famous parties. I shall never forget how she used to toss her head when she came in contact with vulgar people, by which she meant every body that did not visit at her house; nor how sweetly she smiled upon those who approached her with proper respect, and under a due sense of her superior perfections. One of the best things she had was a fine set of teeth, and of all her possessions there was nothing upon which she placed so proper an estimate; every body admired her teeth, and she not only admired them herself, but, with a laudable public spirit, displayed them to the world upon all occasions. It is not to be wondered at, therefore, that when two of those teeth, occupying

a conspicuous post in the front, just between Mrs. Flowerby's ruby lips, and in the very centre of her smile, were accidentally destroyed, she was inconsolable. After mourning over her misfortune for several days, she bethought herself of an expert dentist in the neighbourhood, who had recently acquired celebrity by his success in his vocation. The dentist displayed before her a number of the best shaped and whitest substitutes in his possession.

"There, madam, is a beautiful one ; it is ivory, but I cannot vouch that it will retain its colour."

"That will never do, then ; the colour must be exact. I would not be detected in this matter for the world."

"It would certainly be very unpleasant."

"Oh, shocking ! I had rather have any thing else said of me, than that I showed false teeth. My poor dear teeth ! they were so beautiful !"

"There are some handsome ones, ma'am, and their brilliancy will stand the touch of time. Nothing can be more natural."

"Oh ! these are beauties ! what are they made of ?"

"Of the tooth of a hippopotamus."

"Of a hippo—what did you say, sir !"

"The hippopotamus, ma'am ; a great sea monster."

"Oh, horrible ! do you suppose, sir, that I would ever have in *my* mouth the fang of a terrible sea monster, that had crushed shoals of *raw, live* fish, in his voracious jaw !"

"Here, ma'am," continued the dentist, very coolly handing over another pair, "are two of the handsomest I have ever seen. Your own were scarcely more beautiful."

"These are darlings, indeed! so delicate! of such exquisite whiteness! What are these made of?"

"They are real; I took them from the mouth of a negro boy."

"Oh, you inhuman creature! to think of putting the teeth of a negro into the mouth of a lady—that is worse than the hippo—the dreadful sea monster you spoke of."

"Then, ma'am, I know not how to please you."

"Sir, I *must* be pleased! I ask no favours. I am able to pay for what I set my heart upon."

So they went on; until the conference ended in the lady's issuing the instructions, which we have already heard announced from the lips of the dentist.

Our next portrait shall be that of the heroine. But a few months had passed away, since the brightest star in our constellation of village beauty was Louisa Hutchinson. Her form was fine, and no one ever beheld her face without being struck with its beauty. The grace and loveliness of her appearance were exquisite. The blended dignity and sweetness of her manner were unrivalled. Her mind was vigorous and sprightly, her wit playful, and her conversation highly attractive. Above all there was a joyousness, an air of chaste hilarity, that was particularly engaging, and won the in-

voluntary homage of all who approached her. She was joy personified. To behold her smile, and not to feel its power, was impossible. Her eye, her cheek, her lip, all smiled in unison, as if the stream of intellectual gladness overflowed its fountain, and beamed from every feature. Do I dream when I paint her thus? Far from it. Such was Louisa when I knew her first; when her voice was music, and her touch enchantment; when she was the luminary about whom all lesser lights revolved; when she warmed and animated all. She was the *Belle*. To admire her was the criterion of taste; to follow, to love, to pay her homage, was the common fate of the village youth; and no one was properly graduated in the school of fashion, who had not duly enrolled himself among the number who were vanquished by her fascinations. If such was the beautiful reality, as pictured to the eye of an unimpassioned observer, who shall describe the lovely vision that was imprinted on the heart of a devoted and favoured lover? No tongue can speak, nor does it enter into the heart of man to conceive—unless he be an accepted lover—how the soul clings, and doats, and revels in such a passion, for so bright an object! Not every heart has the capacity to enjoy such a fulness of bliss. There was one who *did* feel, and was worthy to enjoy it, and of him we shall speak hereafter.

Louisa had lost her mother, and her father was old. He had been in good circumstances; but age

and misfortune had combined to reduce him to the most hopeless poverty. His exact situation was for a long while concealed from the public. Few were acquainted with the true situation of his affairs. He had retired from business, had no visible income, and was too infirm to make any personal exertions to support his family. Yet there was a decent appearance of comfort about his little mansion, which precluded the idea of absolute want. Louisa was always plainly, but neatly attired; and so much did the simple style of her dress add to her native graces, that many who knew the delicacy of her taste supposed that she had adopted this mode of dress from choice, and even from a refinement of coquetry. Her little parlour was the scene of cheerfulness. By and by things began to change; one article of furniture after another disappeared; Louisa joined the parties of her companions less frequently; and those who called, were often refused admittance, under the pleas that Miss Hutchinson was engaged, or indisposed. At last, her only servant was dismissed, and the truth was no longer dissembled, that Louisa was not only the nurse of her aged parent, but laboured night and day to procure for him the common necessities of life. She was not ashamed of these employments, nor did any think them disgraceful; on the contrary, the number of her friends and admirers increased with this new display of the loveliness of her character. She continued to be the queen of hearts, the orna-

ment and pride of the village. Happily there is, as yet, in our country, but little of the miserable pride of aristocracy ; and an accomplished woman is not spurned from society, because necessity obliges her to become an active agent in the business of life, and the pride and stay of those who depend on her exertions. Many of Louisa's friends kindly offered their assistance ; and her young companions would often aid her in the needle work by which she gained a livelihood. It is even asserted, by those who pretend to know all about such matters, that her opportunities for entering into the blessed state of matrimony increased with her misfortunes, and that there was no day in her life, in which the proudest youth in the town would not have been happy to lead her to the altar. But her heart was pledged, and she was of too noble a nature to purchase affluence by the sacrifice of its best affections. The supplies of friendship were scanty, and soon exhausted. Charity, in its best form, affords but a miserable relief. Its fountains are meagre and unsteady. Under its kindest aspect it brings a distressing sense of dependence. Louisa's father was a weak and a proud man, in whose mind the decrepitude of age had destroyed all the firmness of manhood, while its foibles remained unchanged. She refused, therefore, the assistance of some from delicacy, and of others from the fear of offending her father ; some of her friends married, and left the village ; others became reduced like herself, until at

last her solitary hours were spent alone, and her table supported solely by the labour of her own hands. She had one friend, who forsook her not: she had a conscience void of offence, a meek and firm reliance in the Redeemer, and an unshaken faith, that He who tempers the wind to the shorn lamb, would not forsake the orphan girl who watched over the bed of a dying parent.

Louisa had an accepted lover, who was worthy of her affection; but he knew little of the real state of her affairs. He was aware that her father was poor, but not that he was in want. He well knew that she had nothing to bestow but herself. He had been absent from the village for several years, in the service of a merchant, at a distant city, and only saw Louisa in the short visits that he was occasionally allowed to make. He, too, was indigent, and their marriage depended on the contingency of his becoming established in business. This was another motive inducing Louisa to withdraw from public notice, to conceal her extreme penury, and to reject, rather than solicit, assistance. She was unwilling that her lover should know that she was labouring for a subsistence; not because she feared that it would degrade her in his eyes, for she knew that he had too much good sense to indulge such feelings; but she could not consent to wound his sensibility, or to place him and herself in so awkward a situation as a knowledge of these facts would have imposed.

Mr. Hutchinson became seriously ill. So long as he had laboured only under the ordinary weakness of old age, she could sit by him and work ; but now he was confined to bed, and her whole time was consumed in the necessary care of the invalid. A physician was called in ; wine and other expensive articles had to be purchased ; poor Louisa found herself surrounded by wants and difficulties too great for all her exertions ; and her courage began to sink, when her parent asked for refreshments which she could not give him, and, in the petulance of dotage, reproached her for negligence of his wants. Still, although a tear sometimes stole down her cheek, her step was firm, and her face serene ; she uttered no complaint, but bent her knee in prayer, bowed her heart in submission, and felt that peace which the world cannot give nor take away.

Such was her situation, when she had gone to the milliner, as she feared, for the last time ; for she knew not how to get materials, or to find time, for a new effort. When she returned home, she retired to her own room, and sunk down in an agony of grief. The gradual but heavy pressure of poverty, the long days of labour and the long nights of watching, the solicitude of filial affection, the pang of "hope deferred," and all her other afflictions, she had borne with a woman's fortitude, for they were woman's peculiar trials, and thousands of her sex have borne them without a murmur. But when relief, and even affluence, appeared within her

grasp, on the one hand, and the sacrifice by which that relief was to be purchased, presented itself on the other, all her sensibilities were at once awakened. Her beauty had been that possession which the world had most admired ; it had procured her homage and adulation, and given her the sway of all the hearts around her. Had she not prized it herself, she would have been more, or less, than human. She thought of him who had garnered up his hopes in her affection ; she knew not what portion of the devoted and faithful love of Edward Linton she owed to her personal charms, nor how that affection might change, could he behold her disfigured, and shorn of her beauty. She thought of her suffering parent, and, with that courage which had heretofore marked all her conduct, determined on the sacrifice.

At the expiration of the half hour, the dentist repaired to the miserable abode of the unhappy girl. It was small, but had once been a comfortable residence ; it was now dilapidated and disfurnished. Louisa received him with calm politeness, and directed him to proceed at once to the operation. He paused, and then slowly counted down the stipulated sum. Finding that no objection was made, he proceeded to extract two of her finest teeth, and then withdrew. Louisa's first emotion was thankfulness for the seasonable relief, and joy and pride that she could now soothe the dying pillow of a parent. For the present, her cares admitted

no other thought. Her father was rapidly declining. As he summoned his strength for the last struggle, he seemed to be favoured with that strong gleam of intellectual light, which sometimes glows over the departing soul, as the beams of the setting sun burst forth before the evening closes. He felt and acknowledged the sacrifices and cares of his daughter, thanked and blessed her for all her kindness, and breathed his last in peace of mind.

We have explained how Louisa became gradually estranged from her friends, and left to struggle alone against her afflictions. The news of her father's death drew her former acquaintances to the house of sorrow, and they were shocked at the full discovery of her situation and sufferings. Every office of kindness was cheerfully performed; Louisa was taken to the house of a friend, where, sustained no longer by those feelings which had heretofore supported her, she sunk under a violent attack of fever. In her dreams of delirium she thought only of Edward Linton, her impassionate admirer, whose love had been her pride, and whose constancy had formed one of her greatest consolations. Her diseased imagination pictured him ripened into maturer manhood, risen from indigence to prosperity, and grown callous to the love of his youth. As she slowly regained her health, and vigour of mind, this fearful dream still preyed upon her spirits; and when she contemplated her faded features, and the sad ravages made in her beauty, by the sacrifice she

had so nobly made to filial duty, her pride induced her to determine to release him from his engagements. She wrote him a feeling and delicate letter, in which, after alluding to the recent loss of her parent, she assured him that her own circumstances were so changed as to render their union impossible, conjuring him neither to answer her letter, nor to seek an interview which could only be painful to both. Thus was a noble minded girl, whose whole life had been a continual sacrifice of feeling to duty, misled, by the pride of beauty, into an act which she believed to be disinterested, but which in truth was unjust.

Edward was a man of strong mind, and generous feelings. His first impulse was to hasten to Louisa, for his heart was wrung, and his long cherished hopes blasted, by her letter. But he, too, was proud and acted on the same principle which had governed her. *He* was poor, and *she* was, as he supposed, still *the pride of the village*. *He* had nothing to offer but himself, while *her* charms might enable her to match herself with the wealthiest, or the most honourable. Had he been rich, he would have eagerly sought an explanation, but poor as he was, he only wept over Louisa's letter, and determined to submit. In another week he was on his way to Europe, as supercargo of a fine ship. His voyage was quick and prosperous. The war between Great Britain and the United States, which

broke out after he sailed, enabled him to sell his cargo at an advance far beyond the most sanguine hopes of his owners. His homeward voyage was short, and already the shores of his native land were in sight, when he was captured by a British cruiser. A prize master was placed on board, and the ship ordered to Halifax. Three days after, by a bold and well-concerted plan, he rose with his own men upon the prize crew, obtained the mastery over them, and carried the ship safely into New York.

His good conduct was munificently rewarded by the owners, and he found himself in easy circumstances.

Two years afterwards, as Dr. Nippers, the dentist, sat one pleasant evening at his door, patting the curly head of a little urchin who climbed on his knee, a handsome carriage drove up, and a lady, richly, but not gaudily dressed, alighted. She was shown in due form into the doctor's study, the operating chair was wheeled out into the middle of the floor, and the worthy dentist stood ready to obey the commands of his fair visiter, whose surpassing beauty and graceful carriage struck him with the same awe which would have been produced by the advent of a supernatural being.

"Have I the pleasure of seeing Dr. Nippers?" enquired the lady.

"That is my name, ma'am, at your service," replied the dentist, bowing obsequiously, but so awkwardly as to upset a half a dozen phials.

“I have heard much of your great skill as a dentist.”

“My fame, ma’am,” rejoined the dentist, modestly, “is perhaps greater than my merits; though I flatter myself that I have been of some service to the afflicted, in my line.”

“Do you recollect having purchased a pair of teeth from a poor girl, a few years ago, for a large sum of money?”

“Oh, very well, very well—that affair has been on my conscience ever since. The poor girl was suffering under some strange affliction, and I have a thousand times reflected on myself, for not giving her the money, and putting a couple of shark’s fangs in old Madame Flowerby’s mouth. Poor thing! I fear the loss of her teeth unsettled her intellects.”

“Why do you think so?”

“She shortly after left the village very suddenly, and I then learned to my sorrow, that instead of practising upon an humble girl, to whom the money would have been a sufficient compensation, I had by mistake robbed an accomplished young lady of one of her chief ornaments. Some time after, I heard that she was teaching a school in ———; there I followed her determined to make all the reparation in my power. But the very day before I arrived there, a young gentleman came and carried her off——”

“And married her *in spite of her teeth*?” enquired the lady, archly.

“I suppose so,” replied the good dentist, too unsuspicious in his nature to recognise the victim of his *pullikens* in the lady before him.

“I am that lady,” rejoined his visiter, “and I have come to restore your money, and to beg you to replace my teeth.”

“Most cheerfully! here they are, the identical teeth. Madame Flowerby changed her mind about them ten times in one week—in the next week she died. I kept them as models, and beautiful ones they are.”

The lady then rose, and after informing him where she lodged, desired him to call the next day and inquire for *Mrs. Linton*.

THE BACHELORS' ELYSIUM.

I passed an evening lately in company with a number of young persons, who had met together for the laudable purpose of spending a merry Christmas; and as mirth exercises a prescriptive right of sovereignty at this good old festival, every one came prepared to pay due homage to that pleasant deity. The party was opened with all the usual ceremonies; the tea was sipped, the cakes praised, and Sir Walter Scott's last novel criticised; and such was the good humour which prevailed, that although our fair hostess threw an extra portion of bohea into her tea-pot, not a breath of scandal floated among the vapours of that delightful beverage. An aged gentleman who happened to drop in, at first claimed the privilege, as "an old *Revolutioner*," of

monopolizing the conversation, and entertained us with facetious tales, told the fiftieth time, of Tarleton's trumpeter, General Washington's white horse, and Governor Mifflin's cocked hat, with occasional pathetic digressions relating to bear-fights and Indian massacres. The honest veteran, however, who was accustomed to retire after smoking one pipe, soon grew drowsy, and a similar affection, by sympathy I suppose, began to circulate among his audience, when our spirits received a new impulse from an accidental turn of the conversation from three cornered hats and horses, to courtship and marriage. The relative advantages of married life and celibacy were discussed with great vivacity, and as there were a number of old bachelors and antiquated maidens present, who had thought deeply and feelingly on the subject, and were, therefore, able to discuss it with singular felicity, the ladies' side of the question had greatly the advantage. A gentleman, who had reluctantly left the card-table to join the ladies, gave his opinion that life was like a game of cards—a good player was often *eucred* by a *bad partner*—he thought it wise, therefore, to *play alone*. “Perhaps,” said a fair miss, “a good partner might assist you.” “Thank you, madam,” said he “court-
ing a wife is nothing more than *cutting for partners*; no one knows what card he may turn.” My friend Absalom Squaretoes gravely assured us that he had pondered on this subject long and deeply, and it had caused him more perplexity than the banking

system, or the Missouri question ; that there were several ladies whom he might have had, and whom, at one time or another, he had determined to marry, "but," continued he, arching his eyebrows with a dignity which the great Fadladeen might have envied, "the more I hesitated, the less inclination I felt to try the experiment, and I am now convinced that marriage is not the thing it is cracked up to be !" Miss Tabitha Scruple, a blooming maid of three score, confessed that for her part, she was very much of Mr. Squaretoes' opinion—it was well enough for honest pains-taking people to get married, but she could not see how persons of sentiment could submit to it—"unless indeed," she admitted, "congenial souls could meet, and, without mercenary views, join in the tender bond—but men are so deceitful, one runs a great risk, you know !"

Mr. Smoothtongue, the lawyer, who had waited to hear every other opinion before he gave his own, now rose, and informed the company that he would *conclude the case*, by stating a few points, which had occurred to him in the course of the argument. He began by informing us the question was one of great importance, and that much might be said on both sides—"Twig the lawyer," said Squaretoes.) He said that so great a man as Lord Burleigh, treasurer to Queen Elizabeth, had written ten rules of conduct, which he charged his son to observe and keep next to the ten laws of Moses, and that the very first of them related to the choice of a wife.

He pointed out all the unfortunate husbands mentioned in history, from Adam down to George the Fourth, and after detailing the relative duties of *baron* and *feme*, as laid down in Blackstone, concluded with sundry extracts from Pope, whose works he declared he set more *store to* than those of any writer in the English language, except Mr. Chitty. He was interrupted by a young lady, who declared that Pope was a nasty censorious old bachelor—so he was. The lawyer replied, that as Mr. Pope's general character was not implicated in the present question, it could not be properly attacked, nor was he called on to defend it—and that, as long as his veracity was unimpeached, his testimony must be believed, which he offered to prove from "Peake's Evidence," if the lady desired him to produce authority. The lady assured him that she was greatly edified by his exposition of the law, and had no desire to see the books—but confessed that though she admired his speech very much, she was still at a loss to know which side he was on. "Madam," said he, with great gravity, "I admire marriage as a most excellent civil institution, but have no inclination to engage in it, as I can never consent to tie a knot with my tongue which I cannot untie with my teeth."

These opinions coming from such high authority, seemed to settle the controversy, and the question was about to be carried *nem. con.* in favour of celibacy, when an unlucky miss, whose cheeks, and

lips, and teeth, reminded one of pearls, and cherries, and peaches, while all the loves and graces laughed in her eyes, uttered something in a loud whisper about "sour grapes," which created a sensation among a certain part of the company, of which you can form no adequate idea, unless you have witnessed the commotions of a bee hive. I now began to be seriously afraid that our Christmas gambols would eventuate in a tragical catastrophe—and anticipating nothing less than a general pulling of caps, was meditating on the propriety of saving my own curly locks, by a precipitate retreat. Fortunately, however, another speaker had taken the floor, and before any open hostilities were committed, drew the attention of the belligerents, by a vivid description of Fiddler's Green. This, he assured us, was a residence prepared in the other world for maids and bachelors, where they were condemned as a punishment for their lack of good fellowship in this world, to dance together to all eternity. - Here was a new field for speculation. A variety of opinions were hazarded; but as the ladies all talked together, I was unable to collect the half of them. Some appeared to regard such a place as a paradise, while others seemed to consider it as a pandemonium. The ladies desired to know whether they would be provided with good music and good partners; and I could overhear some of the gentlemen calculating the chances of a snug loo-party, in a back room. On these points our

informant was unable to throw any light. The general impression seemed to be that the managers of this everlasting ball would couple off the company by lot, and that no appeal could be had from their decision. Miss Scruple declared that she had a mortal aversion to dancing, though she would not object to leading off a set occasionally with particular persons, and that she would rather be married half a dozen times, than be forced to jig it with any body and every body. Mr. Skinflint thought so *long a siege* of capering would be rather expensive *on pumps*, and wished to know who was to *suffer*. Mr. Squaretoes had no notion of using pumps, he thought moccasins would do; he was for *cheap fixings* and *strong*. Miss Fanny Flirt was delighted with the whole plan, provided they could *change partners*; for she could imagine no punishment more cruel than to be confined for ever to a single beau. Mr. Goosy thought it would be expedient *for to* secure partners in time, and begged Miss Demure to *favour* him with her hand for an *eternal* reel. Little Sophy Sparkle, the cherry-lipped belle, who had nearly been the instrument of kindling a war as implacable as that of the Greeks and Trojans, seemed to be afraid of again giving offence; but, on being asked her opinion, declared that it was the most charming scheme she ever heard, and that she would dance as long as she could stand, with any body or nobody, rather than not dance at all.

During all this time I was lolling over the back of a chair,—a lazy habit which with many others I have caught since my third sweetheart turned me off—and was rolling and twisting the pretty Sophy's handkerchief—for I can't be idle—into every possible form and shape. I was startled into consciousness by the dulcet voice of my fair companion, as she exclaimed, "La! Mr. Drywit, how melancholy you are! how can you look so cross when every body else is laughing? pray what do *you* think of the grand ball at Fiddler's Green?" "I never trouble myself, madam, to think about things which do not concern me." "Oh dear! then you have no idea of going there?" "Not I indeed,—I go to no such places." "And not expecting to inhabit the paradise of bachelors, it is a matter of indifference to you how your friends enjoy themselves?" "No, indeed: I sincerely hope that you may caper into each other's good graces, and romp yourselves into the best humour imaginable with the pains and pleasures of 'single blessedness;' as for my single self I intend, unless some lady shall think proper to stand in her own light, to alter my condition." Having uttered this heroic resolution, I made my bow and retired. But the conversation of the evening still haunted my imagination, and as I sunk to sleep, General Washington's white horse, Sophy Sparkle, and Fiddler's Green, alternately occupied my brain, until the confused images settling into a regular train of thought, produced the following vision.

I thought that the hour of my dissolution had arrived, and I was about to take my departure to the world of spirits. The solemnity of the event which was taking place did not affect me however, as it would have done, had the same circumstance occurred in reality ; for my mind was entirely filled with the conversation of the previous evening, and I thought, felt, and died like a true bachelor. As I left the clay tenement which I had inhabited so long, I could not avoid hovering over it for a moment, to take a parting view of the temple which had confined my restless spirit, and for which, I must confess, I had a high respect. I could now perceive that time had made ravages in the features which had lately been mine, that I had not been aware of while living, and that the frame which had carried me through a stormy world, was somewhat the worse for the wear, and I really felt a joy in escaping from it, similar to the emotions with which the mariner quits the shattered bark that has braved the billows through a long voyage. Still, however, I felt something like regret in quitting my ancient habitation, and was beginning to recall to memory the conquests I had made in it, and the sieges it had withstood, when I was obliged to take my departure. I had always thought that spirits flew out of a window, or up the chimney, but I now found that whatever might have been the practice of others, mine was a ghost of too much politeness to withdraw in this manner from a house in which I had

been only a boarder; and accordingly I walked deliberately down stairs, and passed through the parlour, where several of my female acquaintances were talking of me. The curiosity which we have all inherited from our first mother, would have induced me to stop, had I not recollected that it would be very ill bred in me to listen to the discourse of those who were not aware of my presence, and that, according to the old saw, "listeners never hear any good of themselves." I therefore passed on, but could not avoid observing that the current of opinion was rather in my favour, and that those who allowed me no good quality while living, now confessed that at least I had no harm in me. As soon as I reached the open air, my spirit began to ascend for some distance, and then floated rapidly towards the north. It was a brilliant evening, and as the stars shone with uncommon lustre, I could not help fancying them the eyes of millions of beauties, who, having made it their business to teaze the beaux in this world, were doomed to light them to the next.

I do not know how long I had been journeying, when I discovered the sea beneath me, filled with mountains of ice, and I perceived that I was rapidly approaching the north pole. I now congratulated myself upon being able to determine, by actual observation, whether the poles are flattened as some philosophers imagine, together with other questions of like importance to the happiness of mankind.

But how great was my surprise when on arriving at the place, I found that all the philosophers in the world were mistaken, except Captain Symmes, and discovered only a yawning cavern, into which I was suddenly precipitated !

I now travelled for some distance in utter darkness, and began to be very fearful of losing my way, when I suddenly emerged into a new world, full of beauty, melody, and brightness. I stood on the brink of a small rivulet, and beheld before me an extensive lawn, of the richest green, spangled with millions of beautiful flowers. Clusters of trees and vines were scattered in every direction, loaded with delicious fruit. Birds of the loveliest plumage floated in the air, and filled the groves with melody. The garden of Eden, or the paradise of Mahomet, could not be arrayed by a poetic fancy with half the charms of this elysium.

While I stood enchanted with delight, a strain of music stole along the air, resembling that which proceeds from a number of violins, tambourines, and triangles, and I was not a little surprised to recognise the well known air of "O dear what can the matter be !" At the same moment I perceived a female figure advancing with a rapid motion, resembling a *hop, step and jump*. I now cast a glance over my own person, as a genteel spirit would naturally do at the approach of a female, and discovered for the first time, that although I had left my substance in the other world, I was possessed of an

airy form precisely similar to the one I had left behind me, and was clad in the ghost of a suit of clothes made after the newest fashion, which I had purchased a few days before my death. I mechanically raised my hand to adjust my cravat, but felt nothing, and sighed to think that I was but the shadow of a gentleman. As the figure came near, she slackened her pace, and struck into a graceful *chasse forward*, at the same time motioning me to cross the rivulet, which I no sooner did than I involuntarily fell to dancing with incredible agility. The fair stranger was by this time close to me, and we were setting to each other, as partners would do in a cotillion, when she presented her right hand, and *turned* me, as she welcomed me to Fiddler's Green. I was now more astonished than ever, for although when I took the lady's hand, I grasped nothing but air—"thin air," yet she spoke and acted with precisely the grace, manner, and tone of a modern fair belle. She was exceedingly happy to see me at the Green—hoped I had left my friends well—and desired to know how I had been for the last twenty years—since she had seen me. I assured the lady that she had the advantage of me—that I was really so unfortunate as not to recollect my having had the honour of her acquaintance, and that I was totally ignorant of any thing that had occurred *twenty years ago*, as that was before my time. She told me that it was useless to attempt to conceal my age, which was well known at the Green,

and equally unpolite to deny my old acquaintance. Upon her mentioning her name, I recognised her as a famous belle, who had died of a consumption at the introduction of the fashion of short sleeves and bare elbows. Having thus passed the compliments of the morning, my fair companion desired to conduct me to the principal manager of the Green, by whom my right of admittance must be decided, and offering both of her hands, whirled away in a *waltz*.

We soon came to a part of the lawn which was crowded with company, all of whom were dancing, and I was about to advise my conductress to take a circuitous course, to avoid the throng, when she directed me to *cast off*, and *right and left* through it, a manœuvre which we performed with admirable success. On our arrival at the bower of the principal manager, the sentinels danced three times *forward and back*, then *crossed over*, and admitted us into the enclosure. My conductress now presented me to an officer of the court, who, after cutting a *pigeon wing* higher than my head, led me to his superior. The manager was a tall, graceful person, dressed in a full suit of black, with silk stockings, shoes and buckles; an elegant dress sword glittered by his side, but he wore his own hair, and carried a *chapeau de bras* gracefully under his arm. He is the only person in these regions who is permitted to exercise his own taste in the ornaments of his person. He was beating time with one foot, not being obliged, like the others, to dance; I was informed, how-

ever, that he sometimes amused himself with a *minuet*, that step being appropriated solely to the managers, as the *pigeon wing* is to the officers of inferior dignity. On such occasions, an appropriate air is played, and the whole company are obliged to dance *minuets*, to the great perplexity of those ladies and gentlemen who have not studied the graces in the upper world. He received me with a polite bow, and desired me to amuse myself on the Green for a few moments, as he was not then at leisure to attend to me; by which I perceived that dancing gentlemen are every where equally fond of putting off business.

On my return to the plain, I was attracted by the delicious appearance of the fine clusters of fruit that hung from the trees, and reached my hand to pluck a peach—but I grasped nothing! My fair companion was again at my side, and condescended to explain the mystery. “Every thing you see here,” said she, “surprises you. You have yet to learn that marriage is man’s chief good, and they who neglect it are sent here to be punished. In the other world we had the substantial and virtuous enjoyments of life before us, but we disregarded them, and pursued phantoms of our own creation. One sought wealth, and another honour; but the greater number luxuriated in idle visions of fancy. We were never happy but in imagining scenes of delight too perfect for mortals to enjoy. The heart and mind were left unoccupied, while we were

taken up with frivolities which pleased the eye and ear. In the affairs of love, we were particularly remiss. Its fruits and flowers hung within our reach, but we refused to pluck them. Ladies have danced off their most tender lovers, and many a gentleman has gambled away his mistress. The flurry of dissipation and the soft emotions of affection will not inhabit the same breast. We were to choose between them, and we chose amiss—and now behold the consequence! We are here surrounded by fruits and flowers that we cannot touch—we have listened to the same melody until it has become tedious—we are confined to partners not of our own choice—and the amusement which was once our greatest delight is now a toil. When alive, our fancies were busy in creating Elysian fields—here we have an Elysium,—and we lead that life which maids and bachelors delight in—a life of fiddling, dancing, coquetry, and squabbling. We now learn that they only are happy who are usefully and virtuously employed.” This account of the place which I was probably destined to inhabit, was rather discouraging; but my attention was soon drawn by fresh novelties. I was particularly amused with the grotesque appearance of the various groups around me. As the persons who composed them were from every age and nation, their costumes exhibited every variety of fashion. The Grecian robe, and the Roman toga, the monkish cowl, and the monastic veil, and the blanket and

feathers of the Indian, were mingled in ludicrous contrast. Nor was the allotment of partners less diverting. A gentleman in an embroidered suit led off a beggar girl, while a broad-shouldered mynheer flirted with an Italian countess. But I was most amused at seeing Queen Elizabeth dancing a jig with a jolly cobbler, a person of great *bonhommie*, but who failed not to apply the *strap* when his stately partner moved with less agility than comported with his notions. When she complained of his cruelty, he reminded the hard-hearted Queen of her cousin Mary, and Lord Essex. Several of her maids of honour were dancing near her with catholic priests, and I could perceive that the latter took great delight in jostling the royal lady, whenever an opportunity offered. My attention was withdrawn from the dancers by the approach of a newly deceased bachelor, whose appearance excited universal attention. He was a tall, gaunt, hard featured personage, whose beard had evidently not known the discipline of a razor for a month before his decease. His feet were cased in moccasins, and his limbs in rude vestments of buckskin; a powder-horn and pouch were suspended from his shoulders, and a huge knife rested in his girdle. I knew him at once to be a *hunter* who had been chasing deer in the woods, when he ought to have been pursuing *dears* of another description. I determined to have a little chat with him; and approaching, asked him how he liked Fiddler's Green. "I don't know,

stranger," said he, scratching his head. "I 'm rather *jubus* that I have got into a sort of a *priminary* here." I expressed my surprise at his not admiring a place where they were so many fine ladies. "Why as to the matter of that," said he, "there's a *wonderful smart chance* of women here—that are a *fact*—and female society are *elegant*—for them that likes it—but, for my part, I'd a *heap* rather *camp out* by the side of a cane-brake, where there was a good *chance* of bears and turkeys." "But you forget," said I, "that you have left your flesh and blood behind you." "That are a *fact*," said he, "I feel *powerful weak*—but I dont like the *fixens* here, *no how*—I'm a '*bominable* bad hand among women—so I'd thank 'em not to be *cutting their shines* about me." "But, my friend, you will have to turn in directly, and dance with some of them. "I reckon not," said he,—“if I do, I'll agree to give up my judgment,—but if any of 'em have a mind to *run or jump* for a *half pint*, I'd as *leave go it* as not." This gentleman was followed by another, who came in a still more "questionable shape." The polite ghosts could not suppress a smile, at the sight of this moiety of a man, while the ill-bred burst into peals of obstreperous laughter. I easily recognised him to be a *Dandy*; and as he, with several other newly arrived spirits, were hastening to the manager's court, I repaired thither also, in hopes of obtaining an audience.

As we passed along, my conductress pointed out

to me a most commodious arm chair, in the shade of a delightful bower, near which was suspended a richly ornamented tobacco pipe—while a huge tabby-eat sat purring on the cushion. It had an inviting air of comfortable indolence. On my enquiring whose limbs were destined to repose in this convenient receptacle, my companion replied:—"It is called the Chair of Celibacy,—the happy maid or bachelor, whose singleness shall not be imputed to any blameable cause; who spends a good humoured life, and dies at a respectable age, in charity with all the world, shall be seated in that commodious chair, enjoy the company of this social quadruped, and, while pleasantly puffing away the placid hours, may indulge in any remarks whatever upon the surrounding company, and thus enjoy all the luxuries of unmarried life. Its cushion, however, has not as yet found an occupant." "But this," said I, "can be the reward of only one meritorious individual—what is to become of the remainder of those who shall not be sentenced to dance?" "I cannot answer your question," said she, "for as yet no one has appeared who could claim an exemption from the common fate. I suppose, however, that if this chair should ever be filled, others will be provided, should any future members of the fraternity establish their claims to the same felicity."

We soon arrived at the dread tribunal, which was to decide our future destiny; but before the anticipated investigation commenced, the court was

thrown into confusion by an altercation between the Dandy and my friend from the back woods. The former, it seems, had indulged himself in some imprudent jests upon the dress of the latter, which so irritated the gentleman in buckskin, that he threatened to *flirt him sky-high*." The Dandy upon this swelled very large, and assuming an air of vast importance, declared, that "if a *gentleman* had used such language to him, he would know what to do." "I tell you what, stranger," said the woodsman, "you musn't *imitate* any thing of that sort to me,—I don't want to strike such a *mean white man* as you, but if you *come over* them words *agin*, *drot my skin* if I don't try you a cool dig or two, any how. An officer here interposed, and with some difficulty restored peace, as the bachelor in buckskin continued to assert, that the other had *hopped on him* without provocation, and that he wouldn't *knock under* to no man. He was at length in some degree pacified, and strolled off muttering that *he wasn't going for to trouble nobody*—but that they *musn't go fooling about him*. I joined the rough son of the forest as he retired, and endeavoured to appease him by expressing a hope that upon a more intimate acquaintance with this place and its inhabitants, he would find them more agreeable, than he seemed to anticipate from his late experience. "Well, stranger," said he, "I want to be agreeable with every one—but to speak my mind *sentimentally*, on the occasion of this *ruckery* that's been kicked up, I do *verbatimly*

think that there little man is not in his right head, and for that reason, I dont *vally* what he says, *no how*—and most of the folks here seems to be *sort o' crazy*—but I dont like to be *bantered*, no how—and if there's any man, that's *rightly at himself*, that has any thing *agin* me, let him step out, and I'll give him a fair fight—I'm always ready to *offishuate in that point of view*!" I replied, that I hoped there would be no occasion for a further display of his prowess, and repeated my conviction, that all would go well with him. "Well, well," said he, "we'll see—but somehow I dont *like the signs*—I dont feel like I was at home here—I feel *sort o' queer*, like I was out of my range,—but when I get right well *haunted to the place*, maybe I'll like it better."

The manager had now ascended the justice-seat, and was prepared to examine the newly arrived spirits. The first who presented herself, was an unseemly maiden of forty, who stated her case with great fluency. She assured the court, that it was not her own fault that she was here, as she had always conducted herself with great decorum, and had never evinced any dislike to matrimony. Indeed she had once been duly engaged to marry—but her lover coming in unexpectedly upon her one day, when she was only just spanking her youngest sister a little, for breaking a bottle of perfume—"and do you think," continued she, "the ungrateful wretch didn't march off, swearing he had caught a tartar—and from that blessed day to this, I never set eyes

on him, so"—"You may stand aside," said the manager, "until we can find a suitable partner for you."

The next lady was rather younger, and more comely. She declared, modestly enough, that she had never been particularly anxious to marry, although she had never evinced any *particular* reluctance. She had remained unnoticed and unwooed until the age of twenty-four, "wasting her fragrance on the desert air," when she captivated the affections of a very amiable young man. His affairs calling him abroad, they separated under a solemn pledge that their union should be solemnised on his return. His absence was protracted to above a year, and in the mean while another lover appeared. She remained constant until the approach of her twenty-fifth birth-day, on the night of which it was customary, as she understood, for the *old boy*, to make his appearance to unmarried ladies. The dreaded night arrived, and the maid was unwed—"and I was lying in bed wide awake," continued she, "and the room was as dark as pitch, when the old boy appeared, sure enough, and walking on tip-toe to my bed-side (I could hear him, but could not see him) he whispered in my ear

"Take the man,
While you can,
Silly old maid!"

After this awful warning my mind was so troubled, that I determined to find relief by obeying the noc-

turnal mandate, and accordingly I agreed to marry my new lover. But on the very day fixed for the ceremony, my first beau returned, and heard the news; the gentlemen quarrelled, and then—made up,—and I lost them both, which I am sure was not my fault, for with the greatest sincerity I could have sung—‘How happy could I be with either:’—but you know, sir, I could not oblige them both.”

The dandy now made his appearance, and was about to commence his story with a bow as low as his corsets would permit, when the manager suppressing a smile, said, “Be pleased, sir, to pair off with the obliging lady who stands at the bar,—your appearance precludes the necessity of a hearing.”

A languishing beauty now approached, and gently raising her downcast eyes, ogled the judge with a most bewitchingly pensive smile, which seemed to say, “Oh! take me to your arms, my love.” “My history,” said she, “is short and melancholy. My heart was formed for the soft impulses of affection, and was rendered still more sensitive by a diligent perusal of the most exquisite fictions in our language; I devoured those productions, which describe amiable and unfortunate susceptibilities of my sex, and endeavoured to regulate my conduct by the most approved rules of romance. I doted on manly beauty; and knowing that gentlemen admire the softer virtues, I endeavoured, while in their presence, to be all that was soft and sweet. I selected several handsome men, on whom I conferred my par-

ticular regard and friendship, in the hope that out of many I could fix one. To each of these I gave my entire confidence, consulted as to my studies, and entrusted him with the feelings and the sorrows of a too susceptible heart—leaving each to believe that he was the only individual who enjoyed this distinguished honour. To all other gentlemen, and to my own sex, I evinced a polite indifference. My friends treated me with great kindness, but, alas! what is mere kindness! Some of them pressed my hand, and said a great many soft things without coming to the point, and some would even snatch a kiss, for which, not being followed by a declaration of love, I thought I ought to have dismissed them, but I had not sufficient resolution. And thus, with a heart feelingly alive to the delights of connubial affection, and after a miserable life, devoted to its pursuits, I died without enjoying its blisses.”

“A little less solicitude to attain the object, might perhaps have been attended with more success,” said the manager. “We will endeavour to provide you with a friend of whose constancy you shall have no reason to complain. For the present be pleased to stand aside.”

This lady was succeeded by my acquaintance in buckskin, who declared that he never had any use for a wife, *no how*—but that once in his life he felt *sort o’ lonesome*, and it *seemed like* he ought to get married. “I don’t think,” said he, “that it would make me any happier, but though somehow, I’d feel better

contented, so I went to see a young woman in the neighbourhood—she was a right likely *gal* too, and her father was well off—but somehow I didn't like the *signs*, and so I *quit the track*—and that's all the *courten* that ever I did, to my knowledge."

"There is a lady in waiting," said the manager, "who has been as unsuccessful as yourself—perhaps you may *like the signs* better in that quarter." "I reckon its as good luck as any," rejoined the gentleman, "I wouldn't give a 'coon-skin* to boot between her and any of the rest;" and seizing the hands of the pensive beauty, he whirled her off with a swing, which kept her dancing in the air until they were out of sight.

Many other persons of both sexes were examined; but their loves were common place, and their pleas frivolous or unfounded. Pride and avarice appeared to be the greatest foes to matrimony. It would be tedious to detail the numberless instances, in which young persons, otherwise estimable, had, in obedience to these unruly passions, done violence to the best affections of their hearts. The fear of marrying *beneath themselves*, on the one hand, and the ambition to acquire wealth on the other, constituted prolific sources of celibacy.

Parental authority was frequently alleged by the ladies to have been exerted in opposition to their matrimonial views—but it appeared to have been

* Raccoon.

used successfully only where the lover was poor, and where the lady's passion was not sufficiently strong to contend against the parent's prudence.

Many suitable matches had been broken off by *manœuvring*. This seemed to be equally effectual, whether used in friendship or in hostility. We heard of many old ladies, who having sons or daughters, or nephews, or nieces, to provide for, resolutely set their faces against all matrimonial alliances whatever, by which a fortune or a beauty could be taken out of the market; and many others who, without such interest, opposed all matches which were not made by themselves.

I observed, moreover, that every gentleman averred that he could have married, if he had been so disposed; and that not a single lady alleged that she had been prevented by the want of offers.

The last lady who was put to the ordeal, was the daughter of a rich confectioner, who fancied herself a fine lady, because she had fed upon jellies and conserves. It seemed as if all the sweetmeats and sugar plums, which she had swallowed, in the course of her life, had turned to vinegar, and converted her into a mass of acidity. She forgot that sweet things—such as girls and plum cakes—grow stale by keeping; and turned up her nose at lovers of all sorts and sizes, until she became unsaleable. On hearing her doom, she cast a glance of indignation at the judge, and throwing her eyes superci-

liously over the assembly, fixed them on me, and darting towards me, with the rapidity of a tigress, seemed determined to make me her partner or her prey. Alarmed at the prospect of a fate, which appeared more terrible than any thing I had ever fancied, I sprang aside, and rushing towards the judge, was about to claim his protection, when I awoke.

PETE FEATHERTON.

Every country has its superstitions, and will continue to have them, so long as men are blessed with lively imaginations, and while any portion of mankind remain ignorant of the causes of natural phenomena. That which cannot be reconciled with experience, will always be attributed to supernatural influence; and those who know little, will imagine much more to exist than has ever been witnessed by their own senses. I am not displeased with this state of things, for the journey of life would be dull indeed, if those who travel it were confined for ever to the beaten highway, worn smooth by the sober feet of experience. To turnpikes, for our beasts of burden, I have no objection; but I cannot consent to the erection of railways for the mind, even though the architect be "wisdom, whose ways are pleasant, and whose

paths are peace." It is sometimes agreeable to stray off into the wilderness which fancy creates, to recline in fairy bowers, and to listen to the murmurs of imaginary fountains. When the beaten road becomes tiresome, there are many sunny spots where the pilgrim may loiter with advantage—many shady paths, whose labyrinths may be traced with delight. The mountain, and the vale, on whose scenery we gaze enchanted, derive new charms, when their deep caverns and gloomy recesses are peopled with imaginary beings.

But above all, the enlivening influence of fancy is felt, when it illumines our firesides, giving to the wings of time, when they grow heavy, a brighter plumage, and a more sprightly motion. There are seasons, when the spark of life within us seems to burn with less than its wonted vigour; the blood crawls heavily through the veins; the contagious dullness seizes on our companions, and the sluggish hours roll painfully along. Something more than a common impulse is then required to awaken the indolent mind, and give a new tone to the flagging spirits. If necromancy draws her magic circle, we cheerfully enter the ring; if folly shakes her cap and bells, we are amused; a witch becomes an interesting personage, and we are even agreeably surprised by the companionable qualities of a ghost.

We, who live on the frontier, have little acquaintance with imaginary beings. These gentry

never emigrate; they seem to have strong local attachments, which not even the charms of a new country can overcome. A few witches, indeed, were imported into New England by the fathers; but were so badly used, that the whole race seems to have been disgusted with new settlements. With them, the spirit of adventure expired, and the weird women of the present day wisely cling to the soil of the old countries. That we have but few ghosts will not be deemed a matter of surprise by those who have observed how miserably destitute we are of accommodations for such inhabitants. We have no baronial castles, nor ruined mansions;—no turrets crowned with ivy, nor ancient abbeys crumbling into decay; and it would be a paltry spirit, who would be content to wander in the forest, by silent rivers and solitary swamps.

It is even imputed to us as a reproach by enlightened foreigners, that our land is altogether populated with the living descendants of Adam—creatures with thews and sinews, who eat when they are hungry, laugh when they are tickled, and die when they are done living. The creatures of romance, say they, exist not in our territory. A witch, a ghost, or a brownie, perishes in America, as a serpent is said to die the instant it touches the uncongenial soil of Ireland. This is true, only in part. If we have no ghosts, we are not without miracles. Wonders have happened in these United States. Mysteries have occurred in the

valley of the Mississippi. Supernatural events have transpired on the borders of "the beautiful stream;" and in order to rescue my country from undeserved reproach, I shall proceed to narrate an authentic history, which I received from the lips of the party principally concerned.

A clear morning had succeeded a stormy night in December; the snow laid ankle-deep upon the ground, and glittered on the boughs, while the bracing air, and the cheerful sunbeams, invigorated the animal creation, and called forth the tenants of the forest from their warm lairs and hidden lurking places.

The inmates of a small cabin on the margin of the Ohio, were commencing with the sun the business of the day. A stout, raw-boned forester plied his keen axe, and, lugging log after log, erected a pile in the ample hearth, sufficiently large to have rendered the last honours to the stateliest ox. A female was paying her morning visit to the cow-yard, where a numerous herd of cattle claimed her attention. The plentiful breakfast followed; corn-bread, milk, and venison, crowned the oaken board, while a tin coffee-pot of ample dimensions supplied the beverage which is seldom wanting at the morning repast of the substantial American peasant.

The breakfast over, Mr. Featherton reached down a long rifle from the rafters, and commenced certain preparations, fraught with danger to the brute in-

habitants of the forest. The lock was carefully examined, the screws tightened, the pan wiped, the flint renewed, and the springs oiled ; and the keen eye of the backwoodsman glittered with an ominous lustre, as its glance rested on the destructive engine. His blue-eyed partner, leaning fondly on her husband's shoulder, essayed those coaxing and captivating blandishments, which every young wife so well understands, to detain her husband from the contemplated sport. Every pretext which her ingenuity supplied, was urged with affectionate pertinacity ;—the wind whistled bleakly over the hills, the snow lay deep in the valleys, the deer would surely not venture abroad in such bitter cold weather, his toes might be frost-bitten, and her own hours would be sadly lonesome in his absence. The young hunter smiled in silence at the arguments of his bride, for such she was, and continued his preparations.

He was indeed a person with whom such arguments, except the last, would not be very likely to prevail. Pete Featherton, as he was familiarly called by his acquaintances, was a bold rattling Kentuckian, of twenty-five, who possessed the characteristic peculiarities of his countrymen—good and evil—in a striking degree. His red hair and sanguine complexion announced an ardent temperament ; his tall form, and bony limbs, indicated an active frame inured to hardships ; his piercing eye and tall cheek-bones, evinced the keenness and re-

solution of his mind. He was adventurous, frank, and social—boastful, credulous, illiterate, and at times, wonderfully addicted to the marvellous. He loved his wife, was true to his friends, never allowed a bottle to pass untasted, nor turned his back upon a frolic.

He believed that the best qualities of all countries were centered in Kentucky; but had a whimsical manner of expressing his national attachment. He was firmly convinced that the battle of the Thames was the most sanguinary conflict of the age, and extolled Colonel J——n as “a severe colt.” He would admit that Napoleon was a great genius; but insisted that he was “no part of a priming” to Henry Clay. When entirely “at himself,”—to use his own language,—that is to say, when duly sober, Pete was friendly and rational, and a better tempered soul never shouldered a rifle. But let him get a dram too much, and there was no end to his extravagance. It was then that he would slap his hands together, spring perpendicularly into the air with the activity of a rope dancer, and after uttering a yell, which the most accomplished Winnebago might be proud to own, swear that he was the “best man in the country, and could whip his weight in wild cats!” and after many other extravagances, conclude that he could “ride through a crab-apple orchard on a streak of lightning.”

In addition to this, which one would think was

enough for any reasonable man, Pete would brag, that he had the best rifle, the prettiest wife, and the fastest nag in all Kentuck; and that no man dare say to the contrary. It is but justice to remark, that there was more truth in this last boast than is usually found on such occasions, and that Pete had no small reason to be proud of his horse, his gun, and his rosy-cheeked companion.

These, however, were the happy moments which are few and far between; for every poet will bear us witness from his own experience, that the human intellect is seldom indulged with those brilliant inspirations, which gleam over the turbid stream of existence, as the meteor flashes through the gloom of the night. When the fit was off, Pete was as listless a soul as one would see of a summer's day—strolling about with a grave aspect, a drawling speech, and a deliberate gait, a stoop of the shoulders, and a kind of general relaxation of the whole inward and outward man—in a state of entire freedom from restraint, reflection, and want, and without any impulse strong enough to call forth his manhood—as the panther, with whom he so often compared himself, when his appetite for food is sated, sleeps calmly in his lair, or wanders harmlessly through his native thickets.

It will be readily perceived, that our hunter was not one who could be turned from his purpose by the prospect of danger or fatigue; and a few minutes sufficed to complete his preparations. His

feet were cased in moccasins and wrappers of buckskin : and he was soon accoutred with his quaintly carved powder horn, pouch, flints, patches, balls and long knife ;—and throwing “ Brown Bess,”—for so he called his rifle—over his shoulder, he sallied forth.

But in passing a store hard by, which supplied the country with gunpowder, whiskey and other necessities, he was hailed by some of his neighbours, one of whom challenged him to swap rifles. Pete was one of those, who would not receive a challenge without throwing it back. Without the least intention, therefore, of parting with his favourite rifle, he continued to banter back—making offers like a skilful diplomatist, which he knew would not be accepted, and feigning great eagerness to accede to any reasonable proposition, while inwardly resolved to reject all, he magnified the perfections of Brown Bess.

“ She can do any thing but talk,” said he—“ If she had legs, she could hunt by herself. It is a pleasure to *tote* her—and I na-ter-ally believe, there is not a rifle south of Green river, that can throw a ball so far, or so true.”

These discussions consumed much time, and much whiskey—for the rule on such occasions is, that he who rejects an offer to trade, must treat the company, and thus every point in the negotiation costs a pint of spirits.

At length, bidding adieu to his companions, Pete

struck into the forest. Lightly crushing the snow beneath his active feet, he beat up the coverts, and traversed all the accustomed haunts of the deer. He mounted every hill and descended into every valley—not a thicket escaping the penetrating glance of his practised eye. Fruitless labour! Not a deer was to be seen. Pete marvelled at this unusual circumstance, and was the more surprised when he began to find, that the woods were less familiar to him than formerly. He thought he knew every tree within ten miles of his cabin; but, now, although he certainly had not wandered so far, some of the objects around him seemed strange, while others again were easily recognised; and there was, altogether, a singular confusion of character in the scenery, which was partly familiar, and partly new; or rather, in which the component parts were separately well known, but were so mixed up, and changed in relation to each other, as to baffle even the knowledge of an expert woodsman. The more he looked, the more he was bewildered. He came to a stream which had heretofore rolled to the west; but now its course pointed to the east; and the shadows of the tall trees, which, according to Pete's philosophy, ought, at noon, to fall to the north, all pointed to the south. He cast his eye upon his own shadow, which had never deceived him—when, lo! a still more extraordinary phenomenon presented itself. It was travelling round him like the shade on a dial,—only

a thousand times faster, as it veered round the whole compass in the course of a single minute.

It was very evident, too, from the dryness of the snow, and the brittleness of the twigs, which snapped off as he brushed his way through the thickets, that the weather was intensely cold; and yet the perspiration was rolling in large drops from his brow. He stopped at a clear spring, and thrusting his hands into the cold water, attempted to carry a portion of it to his lips; but the element recoiled and hissed, as if his hands and lips had been composed of red hot iron. Pete felt quite puzzled when he reflected on all these contradictions in the aspect of nature; and he began to consider what act of wickedness he had been guilty of, which could have rendered him so hateful, that the deer fled, the streams turned back, and the shadows danced round their centre at his approach.

He began to grow alarmed, and would have turned back, but was ashamed to betray such weakness, even to himself; and being naturally bold, he resolutely kept his way. At last, to his great joy, he espied the tracks of deer imprinted in the snow—and, dashing into the trail, with the alacrity of a well trained hound, he pursued in hopes of overtaking the game. Presently, he discovered the tracks of a man, who had struck the same trail in advance of him, and supposing it to be one of his neighbours, he quickened his pace, as well to gain a companion in sport, as to share the spoil of his fellow hunter.

Indeed, in his present situation and feelings, Pete thought he would be willing to give half of what he was worth, for the bare sight of a human face.

“I don’t like the signs, no how;” said he, casting a rapid glance around him; and then throwing his eyes downwards at his own shadow, which had ceased its rotatory motion, and was now swinging from right to left like a pendulum—“I dont like the signs, I feel sort o’ jubus. But I’ll soon see, whether other people’s shadows act the fool like mine.”

Upon further observation, there appeared to be something peculiar in the human tracks before him, which were evidently made by a pair of feet, of which one was larger than the other. As there was no person in the settlement who was thus deformed, Pete began to doubt whether it might not be the Devil, who, in borrowing shoes to conceal his cloven hoofs, might have got those that were not fellows. He stopped and scratched his head, as many a learned philosopher has done, when placed between the horns of a dilemma less perplexing than that which now vexed the spirit of our hunter. It was said long ago—that there is a tide in the affairs of men, and although our friend Pete had never seen this sentiment in black and white, yet it is one of those truths, which are written in the heart of every reasonable being, and was only copied by the poet from the great book of nature. It readily occurred to Pete on this occasion. And as he had enjoyed through life a tide of success, he re-

flected whether the stream of fortune might not have changed its course, like the brooks he had crossed, whose waters, for some sinister reason, seemed to be crawling up-hill. But, again, it occurred to him, that to turn back, would argue a want of that courage, which he had been taught to consider as the chief of the cardinal virtues.

"I can't back out," said he. "I never was raised to it, no how;—and if so-be the Devil's a mind to hunt in this range, he shan't have all the game."

He soon overtook the person in advance of him, who, as he had suspected, was a perfect stranger. He had halted, and was quietly seated on a log, gazing at the sun, when Pete approached, and saluted him with the usual—"How are you, stranger?" The latter made no reply, but continued to gaze at the sun, as if totally unconscious that any other person was present. He was a small, thin, old man, with a grey beard of about a month's growth, and a long, sallow, melancholy visage, while a tarnished suit of snuff-coloured clothes, cut after the quaint fashion of some religious sect, hung loosely about his shrivelled person.

Our hunter, somewhat awed, now coughed—threw the butt end of the gun heavily upon the ground—and, still failing to elicit any attention, quietly seated himself on the other end of the same log, which the stranger occupied. Both remained silent for some minutes—Pete with open mouth, and

glaring eye-balls, observing his companion in mute astonishment, and the latter looking at the sun.

"It's a warm day, this," said Pete, at length; passing his hand across his brow, as he spoke, and sweeping off the heavy drops of perspiration that hung there. But receiving no answer, he began to get nettled. His native assurance, which had been damped by the mysterious deportment of the person who sat before him, revived; and screwing his courage to the sticking point, he arose, approached the silent man, and slapping him on the back, exclaimed—

"Well, stranger! don't the sun look mighty droll, away out there in the north?"

As the heavy hand fell on his shoulder, the stranger slowly turned his face towards Pete, who recoiled several paces;—then rising, without paying our hunter any further attention, he began to pursue the trail of the deer. Pete prepared to follow, when the other, turning upon him with a stern glance, enquired—

"Who are you tracking?"

"Not you," replied the hunter, whose alarm had subsided, when the enemy began to retreat; and whose pride piqued by the abruptness with which he had been treated, enabled him to assume his usual boldness of manner.

"What do you trail then?"

"I trail deer."

"You must not pursue them further, they are mine."

The sound of the stranger's voice broke the spell, which had hung over Pete's natural impudence, and he now shouted—

"Your deer! That's droll too! Who ever heard of a man claiming the deer in the woods?"

"Provoke me not,—I tell you they are mine."

"Well, now,—you're a comical chap! Why, man! the deer are wild! Thy're jist nateral to the woods here, the same as the timber. You might as well say the wolves, and the painters are yours, and all the rest of the wild varmants."

"The tracks, you behold here, are those of wild deer, undoubtedly; but they are mine. I roused them from their bed, and am driving them to my home, which is not of this country."

"Couldn't you take a pack or two of wolves along?" said Pete, sneeringly. "We can spare you a small gang. It's mighty wolfy about here."

"If you follow me any further, it is at your peril!" said the stranger.

"You don't suppose I'm to be skeered, do you? You musn't come over them words agin. There's no back out in none of my breed."

"I repeat——"

"You had best not repeat,—I allow no man to repeat in my presence,"—interrupted the irritated woodsman. "I'm Virginia born, and Kentucky

raised; and, drot my skin! if I take the like of that from any man that ever wore shoe leather."

"Desist! rash man, from altercation. I despise your threats."

"I tell you what, stranger!" said Pete, endeavouring to imitate the coolness of the other, "as to the matter of a deer or two—I don't vally them to the tantamount of this here cud of tobacco; but I'm not to be backed out of my tracks. So, keep off, stranger! Don't come fooling about me. I feel mighty wolfy about the head and shoulders. Keep off! I say, or you might get hurt."

With this, the hunter, to use his own language, "squared himself, and sot his triggers,"—fully determined, either to hunt the disputed game, or to be vanquished in combat. To his surprise, the stranger without appearing to notice his preparations, advanced, and blew with his breath upon his rifle.

"Your gun is charmed!" said he. "From this time forward, you will kill no deer." And so saying, he deliberately resumed his journey.

Pete Featherton remained a moment or two, lost in confusion. He then thought he would pursue the stranger, and punish him as well for his threats, as for the insult intended to his gun; but a little reflection induced him to change his decision. The confident manner, in which that mysterious being had spoken, together with a kind of vague assurance within his own mind, that the spell had really

taken effect, so unmanned and stupified him, that he quietly "took the back track," and sauntered homewards. He had not gone far, before he saw a fine buck, half concealed among the hazel bushes which beset his path, and resolving to know at once how matters stood between Brown Bess and the pretended conjurer, he took a deliberate aim, fired, and—away bounded the buck unharmed!

With a heavy heart, our mortified forester re-entered his dwelling, and replaced his degraded weapon in its accustomed berth under the rafters.

"You have been long gone," said his wife;—"but where is the venison you promised me?"

Pete was constrained to confess he had shot nothing.

"That is strange!" said the lady. "I never knew you fail before."

Pete framed twenty excuses. He had felt unwell; his rifle was out of fix—and there were not many deer stirring.

Had not Pete been a very young husband, he would have known, that the vigilant eye of a wife is not to be deceived by feigned apologies. Mrs. Featherton saw, that something had happened to her helpmate, more than he was willing to confess; and being quite as tenacious as himself, in her reluctance against being "backed out of her tracks," she advanced firmly to her object, and Pete was compelled to own, "That he believed Brown Bess was somehow——sort o'—— charmed."

"Now, Mr. Featherton!" said his sprightly bride, "are you not ashamed to tell me such a tale as that! Ah, well! I know how it is. You have been down at the store, shooting at a mark for half pints!"

"No, indeed!" replied the husband emphatically, "I wish I may be kissed to death, if I've pulled a trigger for a drop of liquor this day."

"Well, do now—that's a good dear!—tell me where you have been, and what has happened? For never did Pete Featherton, and Brown Bess, fail to get a venison any day in the year."

Soothed by this well-timed compliment, and willing, perhaps, to have the aid of counsel in this trying emergency, Pete narrated minutely to his wife, all the particulars of his meeting with the mysterious stranger. Unfortunately, the good lady was as wonder-struck as himself, and unable to give any advice. She simply prescribed bathing his feet, and going to bed; and Pete, though he could not perceive how this was to affect his gun, passively submitted.

On the following day, when Pete awoke, the events which we have described, appeared to him as a dream; and resolving to know the truth, he seized his gun, and hastened to the woods. But, alas! every experiment produced the same vexatious result. The gun was charmed! and the hunter stalked harmlessly through the forest. Day after day, he went forth and returned, with no better success. The very deer themselves became sensible of his inoffensiveness, and would raise

their heads, and gaze mildly at him as he passed; or throw back their horns, and bound carelessly across his path! Day after day, and week after week, passed without bringing any change; and Pete began to feel very ridiculously. He could imagine no situation more miserable than his own. To walk through the woods, to see the game, to come within gun-shot of it, and yet to be unable to kill a deer, seemed to be the *ne plus ultra* of human wretchedness. There was a littleness, an insignificance, attached to the idea of not being able to kill a deer, which to Pete's mind was downright disgrace. More than once he was tempted to throw his gun into the river; but the excellence of the weapon, and the recollection of former exploits, as often restrained him; and he continued to stroll through the woods, firing now and then at a fat buck, under the hope that the charm would some time or other expire by its own limitation; but the fat bucks continued to frisk fearlessly in his path.

At length, Pete bethought himself of a celebrated Indian doctor, who lived at no great distance. An Indian doctor, be it known, is not necessarily a descendant of the aborigines. The title, it is true, originates in the confidence which many of our countrymen repose in the medical skill of the Indian tribes. But to make an Indian doctor, a red skin is by no means indispensable. To have been taught by a savage, to have seen one, or, at

all events, to have heard of one, is all that is necessary to enable an individual to practise this lucrative and popular branch of the healing art. Your Indian doctor is one who practises without a diploma and without physic; who neither nauseates the stomach with odious drugs, nor mars the fair proportions of nature with the sanguinary lancet. He believes in the sympathy which is supposed to exist between the body and the mind, which, like the two arms of a Syphon, always preserve a corresponding relation to each other; and the difference between him and the regular physician is, that they operate at different points of the same figure—the one practising on the immaterial spirit, while the other boldly grapples with the bones and muscle. I cannot determine which is in the right; but must award to the Indian doctor at least this advantage, that his art is the most widely beneficial; for while your doctor of medicine restores a lost appetite, his rival can, in addition, recover a strayed or stolen horse. If the former can bring back the faded lustre of a fair maiden's cheek, the latter can remove the spell from a churn, or a rifle.

To a sage of this order, did Pete disclose his misfortune, and apply for relief. The doctor examined the gun; and having measured the calibre of the bore, with the same solemnity with which he would have felt the pulse of a patient, directed the applicant to call again. At the appointed time the

hunter returned, and received two balls—one of pink, the other of a silver hue. The doctor instructed him to load his piece with one of these bullets, which he pointed out, and proceed through the woods to a certain hollow, at the head of which was a spring. Here he would find a white fawn, at which he was to shoot. It would be wounded, but would escape; and he was to pursue its trail, until he found a buck, which he was to kill with the other ball. If he accomplished all this accurately, the charm would be broken.

Pete, who was well acquainted with all the localities, carefully pursued the route which had been indicated, treading lightly along, sometimes elated with the prospect of speedily breaking the spell—sometimes doubting the skill of the doctor—and ashamed alternately of his doubts and of his belief. At length he reached the lonely glen; and his heart bounded as he beheld the white fawn quietly grazing by the fountain. The ground was open; and he was unable to get within his usual distance, before the fawn raised her head, looked mournfully around, and snuffed the breeze, as if conscious of the approach of danger. His heart palpitated. It was a long shot, and a bad chance; but he dared not advance from his concealment.

“Luck’s a lord,” said he, as he drew up his gun, and pulled the trigger. The fawn bounded aloft at the report, and then darted away through the brush, while the hunter hastened to

examine the signs. To his great joy, he found the blood profusely scattered; and now flushed with the confidence of success, he stoutly rammed down the other ball, and pursued the trail of the wounded fawn. Long did he trace the crimson drops upon the snow, without beholding the promised victim. Hill after hill he climbed, vale after vale he passed—searching every thicket with penetrating eyes; and he was about to renounce the chase, the wizard, and the gun, when, lo!—directly in his path stood a noble buck, with numerous antlers branching over his fine head!

“Ah, ha! my jolly fellow! I’ve found you out at last!” said the delighted hunter, “you’re the very chap I’ve been looking after. Your blood shall wipe off the disgrace from my charming Bess, that never missed fire, burned priming, nor cleared the mark in her born days, till that vile Yankee witch cursed her!—Here goes!—”

He shot the buck. His rifle was restored to favour, and he never again wanted venison.

THE BILLIARD TABLE.

On one of those clear nights in December, when the cloudless, blue sky is studded with millions of brilliant luminaries, shining with more than ordinary lustre, a young gentleman was seen rapidly pacing one of the principal streets of Pittsburgh. Had he been a lover of nature, the beauty of the heavens must have attracted his observation; but he was too much wrapt up in his thoughts—or in his cloak—to throw a single glance towards the silent orbs, that glowed so beauteously in the firmament. A piercing wind swept through the streets, moaning and sighing, as if it felt the pain that it inflicted. The intense coldness of the weather had driven the usual loiterers of the night from their accustomed lounging places. Every door and shutter was closed against the common enemy, save where the

“Blue spirits and red,
Black spirits and grey,”

which adorn the shelves of the druggist, mingled their hues with the shadows of the night; or where the window of the confectioner, redolent of light, and fruit, and sugar plumbs, shed its refulgence upon the half petrified wanderer. The streets were forsaken, except by a fearless, or necessitous few, who glided rapidly and silently along, as the spectres of the night. Aught else than love or murder would scarcely have ventured to stalk abroad on such a night; and yet it would be hardly fair to set down the few, unfortunate stragglers, who faced the blast on this eventful evening, as lovers or assassins. Pleasure sends forth her thousands, and necessity her millions, into all the dangers and troubles of this boisterous world.

On reaching the outlet of an obscure alley, the young gentleman paused, cast a suspicious glance around, as if fearful of observation, and then darted into the gloomy passage. A few rapid steps brought him to the front of a wretched frame building, apparently untenanted, or occupied only as a warehouse, through whose broken panes the wind whistled, while the locked doors seemed to bid defiance to any ingress, but that of the piercing element. It was in truth a lonely back building, in the heart of the town; but so concealed by the surrounding houses, that it might as well have been in the silent bosom of the forest. A narrow flight of stairs, ascending the outside of the edifice, led to an upper story. Ascending these, the youth, opening the

door with the familiarity of an accustomed visiter, emerged from the gloom of the night, into the light and life of the Billiard Room.

It was a large apartment, indifferently lighted, and meanly furnished. In the centre stood the billiard table, whose allurements had enticed so many on this evening to forsake the quiet and virtuous comforts of social life, and to brave the biting blast, and the not less "pitiless peltings" of parental or conjugal admonition. Its polished mahogany frame, and neatly brushed cover of green cloth, its silken pockets, and party-coloured ivory balls, presenting a striking contrast to the rude negligence of the rest of the furniture; while a large canopy suspended over the table, and intended to collect and refract the rays of a number of well trimmed lamps, which hung within its circumference, shed an intense brilliance over that little spot, and threw a corresponding gloom upon the surrounding scene. Indeed if that gay altar of dissipation had been withdrawn, the temple of pleasure would have presented rather the desolate appearance of the house of mourning.

The stained and dirty floor was strewed with fragments of segars, play-bills, and nut shells; the walls blackened with smoke, seemed to have witnessed the orgies of many a midnight revel. A few candles, destined to illumine the distant recesses of the room, hung neglected against the walls—bowing their long wicks, and marking their stations

by streams of tallow, which had been suffered to accumulate through many a long winter night. The ceiling was hung with cobwebs, curiously intermingled with dense clouds of tobacco smoke, and tinged by the straggling rays of light, which occasionally shot from the sickly tapers. A set of benches, attached to the walls, and raised sufficiently high to overlook the table, accommodated the loungers, who were not engaged at play, and who sat or reclined—solemnly puffing their segars, idly sipping their brandy and water—or industriously counting the chances of the game; but all observing a profound silence, which would have done honour to a turbaned divan, and and was well suited to the important subjects of their contemplation. Little coteries of gayer spirits laughed and chatted aside, or made their criticisms on the players in subdued accents;—any remarks on that subject being forbidden to all but the parties engaged; while the marker announced the state of the game, trimmed the lamps, and supplied refreshments to the guests.

Mr. St. Clair, the gentleman whom we have taken the liberty of tracing to this varied scene, was cordially greeted on his entrance by the party at the table, who had been denouncing the adverse elements which had caused the absence of several of their choicest spirits. The game at which they were then playing being one which admitted of an indefinite number of players, St. Clair

was readily permitted to take a ball ; and, engaging with ardour in the fascinating amusement, was soon lost to all that occurred beyond the little circle of its witchery.

The intense coldness of the night was so severely felt in the badly warmed apartment which we have attempted to describe, that the party broke up earlier than usual. One by one they dropped off, until St. Clair and another of the players were left alone. These, being both skilful, engaged each other single-handed, and became so deeply interested, as scarcely to observe the defection of their companions, until they found the room entirely deserted. The night was far spent. The marker, whose services were no longer required, was nodding over the grate ; the candles were wasting in their sockets, and although a steady brilliance still fell upon the table, the back ground was as dark as it was solitary.

The most careless observer might have remarked the great disparity of character exhibited in the two players, who now matched their skill in this graceful and fascinating game. St. Clair was a genteel young man of about five and twenty. His manners had all the ease of one accustomed to the best society ; his countenance was open and prepossessing ; his whole demeanour frank and manly. There was a careless gaiety in his air, happily blended with an habitual politeness and dignity of carriage, which added much to the ordinary graces

of youth and amiability. His features displayed no trace of thought or genius; for Mr. St. Clair was one of that large class, who please without design and without talent, and who, by dint of light hearts, and graceful exteriors, thrive better in this world, than those who think and feel more acutely. Feeling he had, but it was rather amiable than deep; and his understanding, though solid, was of that plain and practical kind, which, though adapted to the ordinary business of life, seldom expands itself to grasp at any object beyond that narrow sphere. It was very evident that he had known neither guile nor sorrow. In his brief journey through life, he had as yet trod only in flowery paths; and having passed joyously along, was not aware that the snares which catch the feet of the unwary, lie ambushed in the sunniest spots of our existence. He was a man of small fortune, and was happily married to a lovely young woman, to whom he was devotedly attached; and who, when she bestowed her hand, had given him the entire possession of a warm and spotless heart. They had lately arrived at Pittsburg, and being about to settle in some part of the western country, had determined to spend the ensuing spring and summer in this city, where Mrs. St. Clair might enjoy the comforts of good society until her husband prepared their future residence for her reception.

His opponent was some ten years older than himself; a short, thin, straight man—with a keen

eye and sallow complexion. He was one of those persons who may be seen in shoals at the taverns and gambling houses of a large town, and who mingle with better people in stage coaches and steam boats. He had knocked about the world, as his own expression was, until, like an old coin whose original impression has been worn off, he had few marks left by which his birth or country could be traced. But, like that same coin, the surface only was altered, the base metal was unchanged. He aped the gentility which he did not possess, and was ambitious of shining both in dress and manners;—but nature, when she placed him in a low condition, had never intended he should rise above it.

It is unfortunate for such people, that, like hypocrites in religion, demagogues in politics, and empirics of all sorts, they always overact their parts, and by an excessive zeal betray their ignorance or knavery. Thus the person in question, by misapplying the language of his superiors in education, betrayed his ignorance, and by going to the extreme of every fashion, was always too well dressed for a gentleman. In short, he was a gambler—who roamed from town to town, preying upon young libertines, and old debauchees; and employing as much ingenuity in his vocation, as would set up half a dozen lawyers, and as much industry as would make the fortunes of half a dozen mechanics.

Such were the players who were left together, like the last champions at a tournament—who, after vanquishing all their competitors, now turned their arms against each other. For a while they displayed a courtesy, which seemed to be the effect of a respect for each other's skill. It was natural to St. Clair; in the gambler it was assumed. The latter having found the opportunity he had long eagerly sought, soon began to practise the arts of his profession. The game of billiards, requiring great precision of eye, and steadiness of hand, can only be played well by one who is completely master of his temper; and the experienced opponent of St. Clair essayed to touch a string, on which he had often worked with success.

"You are a married man, I believe?" said he.

"Yes, sir,—"

"That was bad play—you had nearly missed the ball."

"You spoke to me just as I was striking," said St. Clair good humouredly.

"Oh! I beg pardon. Where did you learn to play billiards?"

"In Philadelphia."

"Do they understand the game?"

"I have seen some fine players there."

"Very likely. But I doubt whether they play the scientific game. New Orleans is the only place. There they go it in style. See there now! That

was a very bad play of yours. You played on the wrong ball."

"No, sir, I was right."

"Pardon me, sir. I profess to understand this game. There was an easy cannon on the table, when you aimed to pocket the white ball."

"You are mistaken," said St. Clair.

"Oh, very well! I meant no offence. Now mark how I shall count off these balls. Do you see that? There's play for you! You say you are a married man?"

"I said so. What then?"

"I thought as much by your play."

"What has that to do with it?"

"Why, you married men are accustomed to early hours, and get sleepy earlier than we do."

"I did not think I had shown any symptoms of drowsiness."

"Oh, no! I meant no allusion. There's another bad play of yours."

"You will find, I play sufficiently well, before we are done."

"Oh! no doubt. I meant nothing. You play an elegant game. But then, you married men get scared, when it grows late. No man can play billiards, when he is in a hurry to go home. A married gentleman can't help thinking of the sour looks, and cross answers, he is apt to get, when he goes home after midnight."

"I will thank you to make no such allusions to

me," said St. Clair, "I am neither scared nor sleepy, but able to beat you as long as you please."

"Oh, very well! I don't value myself on my playing. Shall we double the bet? and have another bottle of wine?"

"If you please."

"Agreed. Now do your best—or I shall beat you."

Pestered by this impertinence, St. Clair lost several games. His want of success added to his impatience; and his tormenter continued to vex him with taunting remarks until his agitation became uncontrollable. He drank to steady his nerves; but drink only inflamed his passion. He doubled, trebled, quadrupled the bet to change his luck; but in vain. Every desperate attempt urged him towards his ruin; and it was happy for him, that his natural good sense enabled him to stop, before his fate was consummated—though not until he had lost a large sum.

Vexed with his bad fortune, St. Clair left the house of dissipation, and turned his reluctant steps towards his own dwelling. His slow and thoughtful pace was now far different, from the usual lightness of his graceful carriage. It was not, that he feared the frown of his lovely wife; for to him her brow had always been unclouded, and her lips had only breathed affection. She was one of those gentle beings, whose sweetness withers not with the hour or the season; but endures through all vicissitudes.

It was the recollection of that fervent and forbearing love, that now pressed like a leaden weight upon the conscience of the gambler, when he reflected upon the many little luxuries, and innocent enjoyments, of which that lovely woman had deprived herself, while he had squandered vast sums in selfish dissipation. Having never before lost so much at play, this view of the case had not occurred to him; and it now came home to his bosom with full force—bringing pangs of the keenest self-reproach. He recalled the many projects of domestic comfort they had planned together, some of which must now be delayed by his imprudence. That very evening they had spoken of the rural dwelling they intended to inhabit; and LOUISA'S taste had suggested a variety of improvements, with which it should be embellished. When he left her, he promised to return soon;—and now, after a long absence, he came, the messenger—if not of ruin—at least of disappointment. The influence of wine, and the agitation of his mind, had wrought up the usually placid feelings of St. Clair, into a state of high excitement. His imagination wandered to the past and to the future; and every picture, that he contemplated, added to his pain.

“I will go to Louisa,” said he. “I will confess all. Late as it is, she is still watching for me. Poor girl! She little thinks, that while she has been counting the heavy hours of my absence, I have been

madly courting wretchedness for myself, and preparing the bitter cup of affliction for her."

In this frame of mind, he reached his own door, and tapped gently for admittance. He was surprised that his summons was not immediately answered; for the watchful solicitude of his wife had always kept her from retiring in his absence. He knocked again and again—and at last, when his patience was nearly exhausted, a slip-shod housemaid came shivering to the door. He snatched the candle from her hand, and ascended to his chamber. It was deserted!

"Where is Mrs. St. Clair?" said he to the maid who had followed him.

"Gone"———"Gone! Where?"

"Why, sir, she went away with a gentleman."

"Away with a gentleman! Impossible!"

"Yes, sir, indeed she went off with a gentleman in a carriage."

"When?—Where did she go?"

"I don't know where she went, sir. She never intimated a word to me. She started just after you left home."

"Did she leave no message?"

"No, sir, not any. She was in a great hurry."

St. Clair motioned the girl to retire, and sunk into a chair.

"She has left me," he exclaimed, "cruel, faithless Louisa! Never did I believe you would have forsaken me! No, no—it can not be. Louisa

eloped ! The best, the kindest, the sincerest of human beings ? Impossible !”

He rose, and paced the room—tortured with pangs of unutterable anguish. He gazed round the apartment, and his dwelling, once so happy, seemed desolate as a tomb. He murmured the name of Louisa, and a thousand joys rose to his recollection. All—all were blasted ! For she, in whose love he had confided, that pure, angelic being, whose very existence seemed to be entwined with his own, had never loved him ! She preferred another ! He endeavoured to calm his passions, and to reason deliberately ;—but in vain. Who could have reasoned at such a moment ? He mechanically drew out his watch ;—it was past two o’clock. Where could Louisa be at such an hour ? she had no intimates, and few acquaintances, in the city. Could any one have carried her away by force ? No, no—the truth was too plain ! Louisa was a faithless woman—and he a forsaken, wretched, broken-hearted man !

In an agony of grief, he left his house, and wandered distractedly through the streets, until, chance directed, he reached the confluence of the rivers. To this spot he had strolled with his Louisa in their last walk. There they had stood, gazing at the Monongahela and the Alleghany uniting their streams and losing their own names in that of the Ohio ; and Louisa had compared this “ meeting of the waters ” to the mingling of two kindred souls, joining to part no more—until both shall be plunged in the vast

ocean of eternity. To the lover—and St. Clair was still a fervent lover—there is no remembrance so dear, as the recollection of a tender and poetic sentiment, breathed from the eloquent lips of affection; and the afflicted husband, when he recalled the deep and animated tone of feeling, with which this natural image was uttered by his wife, could not doubt but that it was the language of her heart. All his tenderness and confidence revived; and he turned mournfully, with a full but softened heart, determined to seek his dwelling, and wait, as patiently as he could, until the return of day should bring some explanation of Louisa's conduct.

At this moment, a light appeared, passing rapidly from the bank of the Alleghany towards the town. In an instant it was lost—and again it glimmered among the ancient ramparts of Fort du Quesne—and then disappeared. He advanced cautiously towards the ruined fort, and, clambering over the remains of the breast-work, entered the area—carefully examining the whole ground by the clear moonlight. But no animate object was to be seen. A confused mass of misshapen ridges, and broken rocks were alone to be discovered—the vestiges of a powerful bulwark, which had once breasted the storm of war.

“It is deserted,” said the bereaved husband, “like my once happy dwelling. The flag is gone—the music is silent—the strong towers have fallen, and all is desolate!”

Perplexed by the sudden disappearance of the light, and indulging a vague suspicion that it was in some way connected with his own misfortune, he continued to explore the ruins. A faint ray of light now caught his eye, and he silently approached it. He soon reached the entrance of an arched vault, formerly a powder magazine, from which the light emanated. The doorway was closed by a few loose boards, leaned carefully against it, and evidently intended only to afford a brief concealment; but a crevice, which had been inadvertently left, permitted the escape of that straggling beam of light, which had attracted his attention, and which proceeded from a small taper placed in a dark lantern. Two persons sat before it, in one of whom, the astonished St. Clair recognised his late companion, the gambler! The other was a coarse, ill-dressed ruffian, with a ferocious and sinister expression of countenance, which, at once, bespoke his character. They were busily examining a number of large keys, which seemed newly made.

“Bad, awkward, clumsy work!” said the gambler; “but no odds about that, if they do but fit.”

“It’s ill working in the night, and with bad tools,” rejoined the other. “Me and Dick has been at ’em for a week, steady—and if them keys won’t do, I’ll be hanged, If I can make any better.”

“Hav’n’t I been working in the night too, my boy?” said the gambler. “I have made more mo-

ney for us since dark, than a clumsy rascal like you could earn in a month."

"Clumsy or no, you put us into the danger always, and play gentleman yourself."

"Well, that's right. Don't I always plan every thing? And don't I always give you a full share? Come, don't get out of heart. That key will do—and so will that.——"

St. Clair could listen no longer. Under any other circumstances, the scene before him would have excited his curiosity;—but the discovery, that he had been duped by a sharper—a mere grovelling felon—added to the sorrows that already filled his bosom, stung him so keenly, that he had not patience nor spirits to push his discoveries any further.

"It was for the company of such a wretch," said he, as he again mournfully bent his steps homeward, "that I left my Louisa! Perhaps she may have guessed the truth. Some eaves-droppers may have whispered to her, that I was the associates of gamblers and house-breakers! Shocked at my duplicity and guilt, she has fled from contamination!—No, no! She would not have believed it. She would have told me. She would have heard my explanation. Her kind heart would have pitied and forgiven me. Perhaps my neglect has alienated her affection. I have left her too often alone, and in doubt. She has suffered what I have felt to-night, the pangs of suspense and jealousy. She could bear it no longer, my cruelty has driven her for ever from me!"

He again entered his habitation. How changed ! No hand was extended to receive him ; no smile to welcome him. All was cheerless, cold, and silent. A candle, nearly exhausted to the socket, was burning in the parlour, shedding a pale light over the gloom of the apartment : but that bright, peculiar orb, that had given warmth and lustre to this little world, was extinguished ! St. Clair shuddered, as he looked round. Every object reminded him of the happiness he had destroyed ; and he felt himself a moral suicide. Half dead with cold, fatigue, and distress, he approached the fire—when a note, which had fallen from the card-rack to the floor, caught his eye. The address was to himself, and in Louisa's hand writing. He tore it open and read as follows :—

“ That agreeable woman, Mrs. B. who has paid us so many kind attentions, has just sent for me. She is very ill, and fancies that no one can nurse her so well as myself. Of course, I can not refuse, and only regret, that I must part with my dear Charles for a few hours. Good night.

Your devoted

LOUISA.”

The feelings of St. Clair can be better imagined than described, as he thus suddenly passed from a state of doubt and despair, to the full tide of joy. He kissed the charming billet, and enacted several other extravagances, which our readers will excuse

from relating. He retired, at length, to his couch—where his exhausted frame soon sunk to repose.

He rose early the next morning. Louisa was already in the parlour to welcome him with smiles. He frankly related to her all that had happened on the preceding night. Louisa's affectionate heart sympathised in the pain he had suffered, and tears stole down her cheek which was pale with watching.

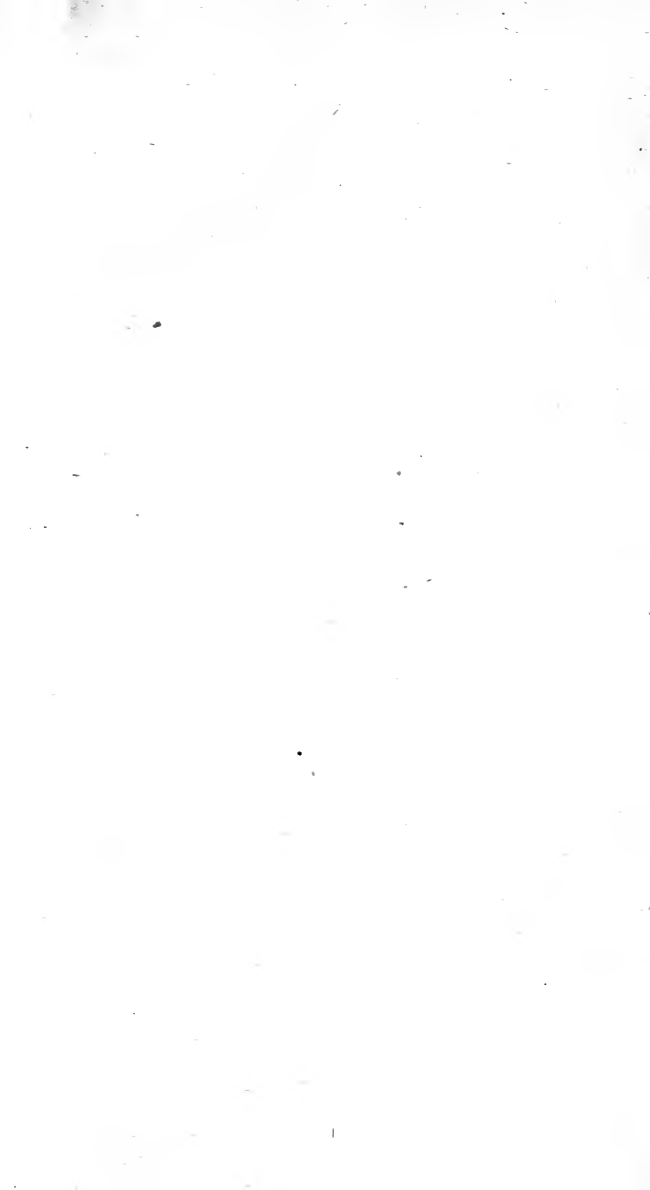
"Do not tell me," said St. Clair, "that I have only suffered that which you have often endured. No—you will not reproach me—but I know it, I feel it; and I here renounce gaming for ever! Never again shall you have cause to complain of my dissipation or neglect."

He kept his word; and acknowledged that the peace and joy of his after days were cheaply purchased with the miseries of that eventful night.

THE END.







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